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NEARBY

Air passengers choose Vayu Vajra over cabs

BENGALURU

The long wait and high fares for a taxi from Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) is forcing passengers to opt for the Vayu Vajra services operated by the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation, which has gradually increased the number of airport services.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 2

Only 27% govt. hospitals conduct fire safety audit

BENGALURU

Over two weeks after the Health Department directed 166 district and taluk hospitals to conduct fire safety audits, not more than 44 healthcare facilities (27%) have completed the exercise.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 3

Congress to hold conventions in districts

BENGALURU

The Congress has decided to hold conventions of various communities, including minorities, other backward classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in all districts to mobilise people towards the party ahead of the 2023 Assembly elections. The party would hold an SC/ST convention in Ballari next month, said sources in the party.

KARNATAKA ▸ PAGE 4

Yasin Malik gets life term for terror funding

NIA court verdict triggers strong political reaction in J&K

DEVESH K. PANDEY
PEERZADA ASHIQ
NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR

A special court on Wednesday sentenced Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik to life imprisonment in a terror funding case, triggering a spontaneous shutdown of the main markets in Srinagar and a strong political reaction in Jammu & Kashmir. Mobile Internet was suspended in parts of the Kashmir Valley "as a precautionary measure".

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an amalgam of regional parties in J&K that includes the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), said the life imprisonment to Malik was "unfortunate and a setback to the efforts for peace".

"Kashmir is a political problem. Muscular policy adopted will have only a negative impact. Instead of resolving the Kashmir problem, it will complicate it. Unless the muscular policy changes, the bloodshed will not end," PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti said.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) court of special judge Parveen Singh sentenced Malik – who previously had pleaded guilty to the charges – to life term under Section 17 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Section 121 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and also imposed a fine of ₹10 lakh. He was also sentenced for several other offences under the UAPA and the IPC.

Grave charges: Yasin Malik being produced at the Patiala House Courts in New Delhi on Wednesday. • R.V. MOORTHY

Death penalty sought

During the course of arguments on the sentence, the NIA prosecutor sought death penalty for Malik, stating that his "terrorist acts" had led to severe chaos and unrest in the Kashmir Valley and resulted in the loss of numerous lives and damage to property. The prosecutor said Malik was involved in terror funding, supported terror outfits and had waged war against the country.

The *amicus curiae*, however, argued for minimum punishment pointing out that since his arrest, and during his confinement, Malik had not engaged in any of the activities for which he had been convicted and that he had voluntarily pleaded guilty.

Malik submitted that after the ceasefire in 1994, he had declared that he would "follow peaceful path of Mahatma Gandhi and would engage in non-violent political struggle". Not only Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, but all the Prime Ministers from the time of V.P. Singh till Atal Bihari Vajpayee had engaged with him and given him a political platform, he said.

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MORE REPORTS ▸ PAGE 9

Gunman kills 19 children at U.S. school

Two teachers shot dead in Texas; assailant killed

ASSOCIATED PRESS
UVALDE

The 18-year-old gunman who slaughtered 19 children and two teachers at a Texas elementary school barricaded himself inside a classroom and "began shooting anyone that was in his way", authorities said on Wednesday in detailing the latest mass killing to rock the U.S.

Law enforcement officers eventually broke into the classroom and killed the gunman. The police and others responding to the attack in Uvalde on Tuesday also went around breaking windows of the school to enable students and teachers to escape, Lt. Christopher Olivarez of the Texas Department of Public Safety said. All the victims were in the same fourth-grade classroom at Robb Elementary, he said.

Investigators did not immediately disclose a motive but identified the assailant as Salvador Ramos, a resident of the community about 135 km west of San Antonio.

Mr. Olivarez said investigators were looking at social media to see if there were any "red flags" before the shooting. Ramos had hinted at an attack on social media, State Senator Roland Gutierrez said. He said the gunman "suggested the kids should watch out" and that he had bought two "assault weapons" after turning 18.

In an address to the nation after the bloodshed, President Joe Biden pleaded for new gun restrictions.

Deadly attack: A girl is inconsolable after the shooting at a school in Uvalde, Texas, on Tuesday. • AFP

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NEET-like rules for CET; hijab, cell phones banned

Wristwatch, calculators, jewellery, high heels, jeans, and T-shirts won't be allowed

JAYANTH R.
BENGALURU

Those writing the Common Entrance Test (CET) will have to abide by rules similar to the ones imposed on students attempting the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET). This means that hijab is barred in the exam hall, as also wristwatch, calculators, mobile phones, and other electronic devices.

The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) is conducting the CET, which is mandatory for admission to professional courses such as engineering and others, from June 16 to 18 across the State. This year, 2.11 lakh students, including 1.4 lakh boys and 1.7 lakh girls, have registered.

KEA Executive Director S. Ramya told to *The Hindu*, "We are planning to conduct the CET exam like NEET. There will be many restrictions in the examination hall. Shortly, we will release a note about the dos and don'ts for students." To avoid malpractices, the KEA is planning to set up jammers and metal detectors at exam centres. For girl students, restrictions have been placed on wearing earrings, bangles, high-heeled footwear, jeans and T-shirts. Girls must wear salwar suits and sandals only.

On the other hand, boys should wear only half shirt and pant without in-shirt, along with sandals. Only plain water bottles will be allowed in the examination halls. COVID-related norms will also be strictly enforced, officials said.

This year, 2.11 lakh students, including 1.4 lakh boys and 1.7 lakh girls, have registered for CET. • FILE PHOTO

Sibal quits Cong., to fight RS polls with SP support

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Two years after rebelling against the leadership of the Gandhis, former Union Minister Kapil Sibal on Wednesday made public his decision to quit the Congress, while filing nomination for the Rajya Sabha elections as an Independent candidate, supported by Samajwadi Party. "I had tendered my resignation on May 16," he told reporters.

"There comes a time when you want to break free from diktats of a party and become independent. I want to move forward and look to the future." Mr. Sibal said he would strive for Opposition unity. "It will be my effort to bring the Opposition together ahead of the 2024 polls to take on the BJP," he told *The Hindu*.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Bonding time

Common goal: Tiwa tribesmen performing their traditional dance at the Wanchuwa festival at a village in Karbi Anglong district of Assam on Wednesday. Agriculture is the mainstay of the community that lives in the hills. During the festival, Tiwas pray for a bountiful harvest and protection from pests and natural calamities. • RITU RAJ KONWAR

Nagesh offers to meet writers who want their lessons dropped

Two of them had said they'll revoke nod to use their writings

KARNATAKA BUREAU
MYSURU/BENGALURU

TEXTBOOK REVISION ROW

Amid the spiralling row over revision of school textbooks in the State, Minister for Education B.C. Nagesh offered to meet Kannada writers who have asked the State government to drop their writings in the school curriculum.

On Tuesday, writers Devanur Mahadeva and G. Ramakrishna had said that they will revoke permission to use their writings in textbooks in protest against the revision committee dropping works of several progressive writers.

'Will meet writer'

Reacting to Mr. Mahadeva's letter to the State government revoking permission to use his writing, Mr. Nagesh said he will meet the writer and convince him not to do so. The Minister pointed out that the textbook revision committee was set up more than six months ago and the revised textbooks were already being printed. He said he would not like to comment on the senior litterateur.

He attributed responses of writers to "Congress's efforts to politicise the textbook revision exercise."

"Around two crore revised textbooks will be printed. About 75% of textbooks are already printed. Now, how it is possible to drop some lessons?" asked the Minister, speaking to *The Hindu*.

"Whenever the Bharatiya Janata Party has come to power, things like this have happened. Earlier, some people returned Padma awards," he said.

"The writers have the right to register their protest in a democratic set up. I will try to talk with the writers. Later, will discuss with Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai also," Mr. Nagesh said.

Counter campaign

When Mr. Nagesh's reaction was brought to Mr. Mahadeva's notice, the writer said he would join hands with progressive forces, who are planning to educate the students about the country's Constitution through various online platforms.

He said he does not want children to fall prey to superstition.

"The campaign will promote secularism, scientific temper and motivate children to ask questions," Mr. Mahadeva said.

Two Bescom workers die, one injured in electrical accident

They came in contact with wire while pulling electric lines

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Two contract workers died on the spot and one was seriously injured on Wednesday evening after suffering an electric shock while changing an old 11 kV capacity wire of the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) near Heerekattiganahalli in Chintamani (Chickballapur district) rural division.

The deceased have been identified as Sanjeev, 22, and Siddappa, 19, from Haveri district. Parvez, 22, is receiving treatment at a hospital in Kolar for severe injuries.

"The Chintamani division of Bescom had received line clearance for the changing of 11 kV agricultural feeder wire, and had given the contract to M. Raja Electricals of Tumakuru. While pulling the electric lines, the workers came in contact with a 66 kV wire of the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) and that led to the accident," said senior Bescom officials who visited the spot.

The officials also alleged that M. Raja Electricals had not taken security measures and had not arranged for adequate supervision before taking up the work. The bodies of the two men have been shifted to the government hospital and will be handed over to the family after post-mortem.

The accident spot in Chintamani.

Vigilance cell revamped to ensure quality of civic works

It will oversee major projects and conduct surprise inspection of 10% of works randomly selected

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

With the recent bout of rains exposing shortcomings in the city's infrastructure, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) Chief Commissioner has revamped the Technical Vigilance Cell under Commissioner (TVCC) as a body to exclusively check and ensure quality of various projects in the city.

"The TVCC was formed in 2006 to ensure quality of civic works. However, its scope was expanded, and now it is looking into clearing bills, and mostly doing audit work, making it almost a part of the system, which has made it sort of redundant. We have now restored the TVCC to its original charter," said BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath.

The TVCC, which was reporting to the Special Commissioner, Projects, will henceforth report to the Chief Commissioner.

"The TVCC has been relieved of all duties regarding audit and bill clearance. The cell will oversee all major works, as directed by the commissioner, and will conduct a surprise inspection of 10% of the works randomly selected to ensure quality of works," Mr. Giri Nath said.

The cell, which has a record of exposing corruption scandals, has itself come under the scanner.

Corruption charges

For instance, chief engineer Doddaiah A.B., tainted with corruption charges, and posted in the TVCC, was transferred on Saturday. Lokayukta had found that officials in the TVCC had themselves generated fake bills to the tune of ₹118 crore.

"If the TVCC has to truly work as a vigilance cell, people of unquestionable integrity need to be posted there, which has not been the case for the past many years," a senior civic official said.

There has been a lot criticism regarding the poor civic infrastructure in Bengaluru. • FILE PHOTO

The TVCC was formed in 2006 to ensure quality of civic works. However, its scope was expanded, and now it is looking into clearing bills, and mostly doing audit work, making it almost a part of the system, which has made it sort of redundant.

TUSHAR GIRI NATH
BBMP Commissioner

THE HINDU

Text & Context

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Reservation in polls

40 The number of BJP leaders detained by the Mumbai police while they were protesting outside the party office seeking reservation for OBCs (Other Backwards Classes) in elections. Among the protesters who were detained were Leader of Opposition Pravin Darekarand and former Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar. The Supreme Court earlier this year rejected the Maharashtra State Backward Classes Commission's interim report recommending the restoration of 27% reservation for OBCs in local body polls. PTI

Turbulence in air

1,681 In ₹ crore, IndiGo's net loss in the quarter ending March due to the Omicron wave, high fuel costs and a weakening rupee. This year's Q4 loss was 46.6% more than the loss incurred in the corresponding period a year ago. India's largest airline's total net loss of 2021-22 was ₹6,161 crore as compared to the ₹5,806 crore net loss it incurred in 2020-21. Although traffic rebounded during the latter half of the quarter, the airline was challenged by high fuel costs and a weakening rupee. PTI

Hunger crisis

1.1 In million, the number of Afghan children under the age of five who will likely face the most severe form of malnutrition this year, according to the UN, as increasing numbers of wasting-away children are brought into hospital wards. Poverty is spiralling, making more Afghans in need of aid as global food prices are mounting from the war in Ukraine. Promises of international funding are not coming through, according to an assessment report issued this month. The nation has also been hit by one of its worst droughts in decades. AP

Sugar export ban

10 In million tonnes, the quantity at which India is restricting its sugar exports in the current season to help maintain domestic availability and keep prices stable. The decision comes amid signs of tightening world supplies. India is the second-largest producer, after Brazil, and the biggest consumer of sugar in the world, according to the All India Sugar Trade Association. It's the second-largest exporter of sugar. The export curbs are its first in six years. Estimates vary but the country is expected to produce more than 30 million tonnes in this season. AP

Tourism picks up

3.8 In million, the number of domestic tourists in Kerala in the first quarter of 2022, thus marking an impressive growth of 72.48% as compared to the 2.2 million footfalls during the corresponding period of 2021. Five districts — Idukki, Malappuram, Kasaragod, Pathanamthitta and Wayanad — registered the highest ever footfall since their formation. Overall, there was a significant increase of 16 lakh tourists in the first three months of the current year compared to the corresponding period last year. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

Understanding the nature of U.S.-Taiwan relations

What is the controversy surrounding Biden's recent statement on Taiwan? Is the U.S. shifting from strategic ambiguity to strategic clarity?

THE GIST

- The President of the United States Joe Biden on May 23, gave an affirmative reply to a question on whether the U.S. will come to the aid of Taiwan militarily in case of an invasion by China. This has raised questions on whether the U.S. is shifting from its long-standing policy of strategic ambiguity over Taiwan to that of strategic clarity.
- The very foundation of the U.S. rapprochement with China is a mutual understanding on the Taiwan question. This has been outlined in three documents — the Shanghai Communique (1972), the Normalisation Communique (1979) and the 1982 Communique. As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognised China, but stated that it merely "acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China".
- It is possible that the Russo-Ukraine conflict might have created a context where a strong message to the adversary becomes essential, especially considering Beijing's wearing patience and Taipei's increasingly pro-independence slant.

ANAND V.

The story so far: The President of the United States Joe Biden made a controversial statement on May 23, during a joint news conference with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida a day before the start of the Quad summit in Japan. He gave an affirmative reply to a question on whether the U.S. will come to the aid of Taiwan militarily in case of an invasion by China. This is the third time that he has made such a statement, raising questions about whether the U.S. is shifting from its long-standing policy of strategic ambiguity over Taiwan to that of strategic clarity.

What is the Taiwan issue?

Taiwan is an island territory located off the coast of mainland China, across the Taiwan Strait. After their defeat to the communist forces in the Chinese civil war (1945-1949), the ruling Kuomintang (Nationalist) government of China fled to Taiwan. They transplanted the Republic of China (ROC) government in Taiwan, while the Communist Party of China (CPC) established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the mainland. Since then, the PRC considers the island as a renegade province awaiting reunification by peaceful means, if possible. Meanwhile, the ROC retained its membership at the United Nations and its permanent seat at the UN Security Council (UNSC). The cross-strait relations became strained as a result of the Cold War, with the PRC allying itself with the Soviet Union (USSR) and ROC with the U.S. This resulted in the two Taiwan Strait crises of the 1950s.

However, with the shifting geopolitics of the Cold War, the PRC and the U.S. were forced to come together in the 1970s to counter the growing influence of the USSR. This led to the US-China rapprochement demonstrated by the historic visit of then U.S. President Richard Nixon to PRC in 1972. The same year, the PRC displaced ROC as the official representative of the Chinese nation at the UN. Diplomatic relations with the PRC became possible only if countries abided by its "One China Principle" – recognising PRC and not the ROC as China. Taiwan transitioned from a single party state to a multi-party democracy at the same time that China reformed its economic system under Deng Xiaoping, and by the end of the Cold War they became economically entangled; nevertheless, they continue to compete for international recognition and preparing themselves for the worst possible scenario.

How has the U.S's stance on the Taiwan question evolved vis-à-vis China?

The very foundation of the U.S. rapprochement as well as its recognition of the PRC is a mutual understanding on the Taiwan question. This has been outlined in three documents – the Shanghai Communique (1972), the Normalisation Communique (1979) and the 1982 Communique. According to the 1972 communique, the U.S. agreed to the 'one China principle', with an understanding that it "acknowledges" and "does not challenge" that "all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China."

As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognised PRC, but stated that it merely "acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China". It also established unofficial relations with Taiwan through this communique in the name of the people of both the countries. The 1982 communique assuaged Chinese concerns of the possibility for continued arms supply to Taiwan by the U.S. provisioned in the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) of 1979 which enabled it to resume supply of "defensive" arms. With these foundational arrangements, the U.S. developed a way to balance the recognition of PRC with the concerns of Taiwan. This delicate balance, however, has increasingly been tested of late.

Why is the issue significant today?

As Taiwan's democracy flourished, the popular mood drifted towards a new Taiwanese identity and a pro-independence stance on sovereignty. The past decade has seen considerable souring of ties across the Strait, as the Democratic People's Party (DPP) became the most powerful political force in Taiwan, sweeping two consecutive elections in the past decade. The DPP government, led by Tsai Ing Wen has been catering to the pro-independence constituency in Taiwan and seeks to diversify economic relations away from China. This has made China wary of Tsai. China has always seen Taiwan as a territory with high geopolitical significance. This is due to its central location in the First Island Chain between Japan and the South China Sea, which is seen as the first benchmark or barrier for China's power projection. U.S. military outposts are scattered throughout this region, and hence, taking control of Taiwan would mean a significant breakthrough as per China's geostrategic calculus. Moreover, its reunification will formally bury the remaining ghosts of China's "century of humiliation". China under President Xi Jinping seems to have lost its patience and currently sees very slim chances of a peaceful reunification, given the current downturn in cross-Strait relations and the trajectory of the wider geopolitics. This has been demonstrated in the growing frequency of rhetorical spats between Beijing and Taipei, and China's military drills and patrols across the Strait, as well as the record-breaking aerial transgressions by China of Taiwan's Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). Also, this build-up of tensions is happening simultaneously and drawing parallels with the Russo-Ukrainian conflict.

Is U.S. strategy towards Taiwan witnessing a major transformation?

The U.S.'s strategy towards Taiwan in light of the unresolved nature of the cross-Strait relations has been marked by what has been called "strategic ambiguity", which is quite visible in the TRA.

The TRA had come up in the wake of U.S.'s recognition of the PRC, and the resultant termination of the 1954 U.S.-Taiwan mutual defence treaty. As per the TRA, the U.S. has stated clearly that the establishment of bilateral relations with the PRC rests upon "the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means". It also states that it is the policy of the U.S. "to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardise the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan". Hence, there is no clear guarantee here that the U.S. will militarily involve in a situation where China attempts to invade Taiwan, short of supplying "defensive weapons". The U.S. has for long utilised this strategic ambiguity with its own interpretation of the 'one China principle' to maintain its strategic interests in the Western Pacific. It is in this context that Mr. Biden's statements have made controversy. The reason behind why Mr. Biden stated that the U.S. will come to the rescue of Taiwan, as well as the backtracking by the administration later is not clear. It is quite possible that this could have been a "gaffe", as portrayed by some sections of the media. However, this is the third time that Mr. Biden has put forward such a strong, clear viewpoint to the media – the first was in August and the second in October, 2021. This repeated assertive signalling seems to be therefore more than just accidental. Rather, it is speculated that the need to reassure U.S. allies in the Indo-Pacific in lieu of the Quad summit could have played a part in taking a bolder stance by the Biden administration.

Stronger ties: In this photo released by the Taiwan Presidential Office, members of a U.S. Congressional delegation pose with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen, and other Taiwanese officials during a meeting at the Presidential Office in Taipei, Taiwan on April 15, 2022. • AP

It is also possible that the Russo-Ukraine conflict might have created a context where a strong message to the adversary becomes essential, especially considering Beijing's wearing patience and Taipei's increasingly pro-independence slant. It may have reached the point where strategic ambiguity may be losing its relevance to strategic clarity. However, another plausible interpretation can be that this messaging is aimed by the U.S. for eliciting responses and testing the waters to get a feel of China's game plan for the Indo-Pacific, at a time when a grand distraction is underway at the Eurasian-Atlantic theatre. This may muddle the level of U.S.'s strategic ambiguity further.

Dr. Anand V. teaches at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Karnataka

EXPLAINER

The monkeypox virus: origins and outbreaks

How did monkeypox spread? What are the observations from genome sequencing?

VINOD SCARIA
AFRA SHAMNATH

The story so far: With cases being reported from across the world, monkeypox has caught everyone's attention. The present outbreak has a toll of over 220 confirmed cases spread across 19 countries. U.K., Spain and Portugal are leading the pack with the highest number of confirmed cases but no deaths reported till date.

The present outbreak has been interesting in many ways. While sporadic outbreaks have occurred in Africa and a few outside of Africa in regions which had recorded travel from areas where outbreaks have occured, such massive flare-ups spanning multiple countries simultaneously has not happened before. Additionally many of the affected patients did not travel to regions where the disease is considered prevalent and the initial cases were largely, but not exclusively among young individuals who identify themselves as men who have sex with men (MSM).

What is the monkeypox virus?

Monkeypox is not a new virus. The virus, belonging to the poxvirus family of viruses, was first identified in monkeys way back in 1958, and therefore the

• REUTERS

name. The first human case was described in 1970 from the Democratic Republic of Congo and many sporadic outbreaks of animal to human as well as human to human transmission has occurred in Central and West Africa in the past with significant mortality. After the elimination of smallpox, monkeypox has become one of the dominant poxviruses in humans, with cases increasing over years along with a consequent reduction in the age-group affected. Since the transmission occurs only with close contact, the outbreaks have been in many cases self-limiting. Since in the majority of affected people, the incubation period ranges from five to 21 days and is often mild or self-limiting, asymptomatic cases could transmit the disease unknowingly. The outbreaks in Central Africa are thought to have been contributed by close contact with animals in regions adjoining forests. While monkeys are possibly only incidental hosts, the reservoir is not known. It is believed that rodents and non-human primates could be potential reservoirs.

Does the virus mutate?

Monkeypox virus is a DNA virus with a quite large genome of around 2,00,000 nucleotide bases. While being a DNA virus, the rate of mutations in the monkeypox virus is significantly lower (~1-2 mutations per year) compared to RNA viruses like SARS-CoV-2. The low rate of mutation therefore limits the wide application of genomic surveillance in providing detailed clues to the networks of transmission for monkeypox, unlike what was possible for SARS-CoV-2.

A number of genome sequences in recent years from Africa and across the world suggest that there are two distinct clades of the virus – the Congo Basin/Central African clade and the West African clade. Each of the clades further have many lineages. The Central African/Congo basin clade is thought to have a higher transmission and virulence compared to the West African clade. It is remarkable and noteworthy that the enormous capacity and expertise in sequencing and analysis of genome sequences of viral pathogens built during the COVID-19 pandemic has come in handy for investigating the present outbreaks.

What do the genomes say?

With over a dozen genome sequences of monkeypox now available from across the world due to the current outbreak, it is reassuring that the sequences are quite identical to each other suggesting that only a few introductions resulted in the present spread of cases. Additionally, almost all genomes have come from the West African clade, which has much lesser fatality compared to the Central African one.

This also roughly corroborates with the epidemiological understanding that major congregations in the recent past contributed to the widespread transmission across different countries. While unlike COVID-19, the slow rate of mutations preclude us from using genomic sequences for fine-tracing of the contact networks, the sequences largely belong to the West African lineage of the virus, which has shown to be associated with lesser virulence. The virus genomes also show very close similarity with those from the recent outbreak in Nigeria during the 2017-2019 period suggesting that the present outbreak is not driven by a particular new variant, but possibly related to unique transmission networks.

Does it have an effective vaccine?

It is reassuring that we know quite a lot more about the virus and its transmission patterns. We also have effective ways of preventing the spread, including a vaccine. The smallpox/vaccinia vaccine provides protection. While the vaccine has been discontinued in 1980 following the eradication of smallpox, emergency stockpiles of the vaccines are maintained by many countries. Younger individuals are unlikely to have received the vaccine and are therefore potentially susceptible to monkeypox which could partly explain its emergence in younger individuals.

Learning from the enormous wealth of knowledge from African countries which have effectively managed the monkeypox outbreaks in the past would go a great way in containing the present outbreak. While we have many effective ways of containing the outbreak, including contact-tracing and a vaccine, efforts to bridge the divide in health, knowledge, experience and infrastructure could contribute to long-lasting impact in preventing and managing future outbreaks and contribute to an equitable and global public health.

The authors are researchers at the CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB). All opinions expressed are personal.

THE GIST

- Monkeypox belongs to the poxvirus family of viruses and was first identified in monkeys way back in 1958. The present outbreak has a toll of over 220 confirmed cases spread across 19 countries.
- A number of genome sequences in recent years from Africa and across the world suggest that there are two distinct clades of the virus — the Congo Basin/Central African clade and the West African clade.
- The smallpox/vaccinia vaccine provides protection against the virus. While the vaccine has been discontinued in 1980 following the eradication of smallpox, emergency stockpiles of the vaccines are maintained by many countries.

As cabs become costlier, air passengers shift to Vayu Vajra

BMTC increases airport bus services; inches closer to pre-pandemic revenues

SUCHITH KIDIYOOR
BENGALURU

The long wait and high fares for a taxi from Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) is forcing passengers to opt for the Vayu Vajra services operated by the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), which has gradually increased the number of airport services and is inching closer to the pre-COVID revenue levels.

From 80 Vayu Vajra services in March, it's now 94. On weekends, additional services are operated depending on arrivals of flights.

With increased ridership, the daily revenue has jumped from ₹15.65 lakh (in March) to ₹21 lakh (in May), getting closer to the pre-pandemic levels of around ₹24 lakh.

A BMTC official said, "Vayu Vajra services are cheaper than taxis to travel to and from the airport. This is one of the factors favouring the buses. Also, flight operations – both domestic and international – increased from April, resulting in more footfall. Depending on the arrival details, we are running the required number of Vayu Vajra services."

The number of Vayu Vajra services has increased from 80 in March to 94 now. • FILE PHOTO

Air passengers have been complaining about a slew of issues – longer waiting time, drivers demanding excess fare, not taking toll roads but asking passengers to pay toll fee at the end of the trip, and not switching the meter on. Aggregators are yet to resolve these issues.

Ranjan V., an air passenger said, "I was waiting for over half an hour to book a cab. Like me, there were many other people. Then, BMTC bus crew approached me, and asked where I was heading to. I told him Shantinagar. He shared more details about the bus service. When I agreed to travel by bus, he took our luggage and helped us to board the bus. The crew was very polite and professional. It was a good journey and we saved a lot of money as well".

Though the Vayu Vajra services are economical compared to taxis, the first-mile and the last-mile connectivity from bus stops is an issue for passengers.

Rakshita Prakash, a regular traveller, said, "There is no doubt that fares are economical compared to taxis. However, for women passengers, finding a taxi or an auto from bus stops late at night is an issue".

Passengers also feel that the BMTC has to work on making the services more reliable by providing a mobile app that helps passengers to book tickets, track bus arrival, and others. Earlier, the BMTC had allowed the passengers to book tickets online on the KSRTC website, but after the outbreak of the pandemic, it was discontinued.

Director (IT) of BMTC A.V. Surya Sen said the corporation is working on further popularising services. "Passenger occupancy is good on trips coming from the airport. However, for certain reasons, occupancy is low on buses going to the airport. Passengers may be anxious about buses reaching on time. We have already taken measures to increase the frequency and make services more reliable."

The BMTC has started services from new points to the airport. Recently, services were introduced from Kengeri. The official said that the BMTC will hold talks with Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) to open counters near the exit point to assist the air passengers. "There are some concerns raised over non-availability of security staff at the TTMC or major bus stops when the buses arrive at night. We have taken measures to deploy required security staff at night," said the official.

Vajra AC bus revenue up

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The reduction in fares of Vajra AC buses operated in city limits is paying rich dividends to the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation with the revenue doubling.

After the outbreak of the pandemic, a majority of the BMTC buses remained off road. Work from home option forced the corporation to operate a limited number of services. Mid-December, the Corporation had reduced the Vajra fares by 34% and started operating more services. .

Mid-December, the corporation was running 75 Vajra services in city limits and now it has been increased to 258. The revenue has gone up from ₹7 lakh per day to ₹17.37 lakh.

"Earlier, we were operating a limited number of services on IT corridors such as ORR, Whitefield and Electronics City. Due to increased demand, we have gradually increased the services. After the outbreak of the pandemic, there was hardly any demand for monthly passes. But now, over 2,200 are purchasing monthly passes to travel in Vajra services," an official of the BMTC said.

The BMTC is introducing AC buses on new routes and running AC buses on suburban routes too.

Captured on reel

The Indian spot-billed duck, a non-migratory breeding duck, egret, and Indian pond heron spotted at a lake near Uyyamballi in Ramanagaram district. • K. MURALI KUMAR

Varthur residents oppose construction of elevated corridor

'It will not benefit the 20,000 villagers and will hamper trade activities, land value, and the ancient history of Varthur'

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Residents of Varthur are opposing the ₹482 crore flyover being built by the Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) from Varthur lake bund to Vishal Mart. They argue that the flyover will only service a few new apartments and not all citizens in general.

"The flyover will not benefit the 20,000 villagers in Varthur. It will hamper trade activities, land value, and the ancient history of Varthur and it will also act as an obstruction to the chariot procession of Chennarayaswamy fair. We can also not dream of the metro and it will make development difficult in the neighbouring villages of Valepura, Matsandra, and others," the Varthur Citizens' Welfare Forum said in a press release.

The residents argue that Varthur main road should be widened with the allocated money instead of constructing an elevated corridor. They say that instead, underpasses should be constructed from Varthur High School and Varthur police station to connect to Balagare road to solve the traffic bottleneck in the area.

"There are high-rise apartments coming up here and a large part of the IT crowd is moving into this area. There are no basic amenities like drinking water, street lights, or stormwater drains at many places in Varthur. Instead of providing such things, the government is planning to build a flyover which will do harm than good. They have also not taken inputs from all the stakeholders involved," said Jagadish Reddy Nagappa of Varthur Rising.

The KRDCL however, says that the elevated corridor will become a part of a wide flyover network which is being constructed across the city to provide traffic relief. "The two-lane Varthur main road is being widened to a 25-meter six-lane road. The elevated corridor will become a four-lane road. We have designed the plan in such a way that the chariot procession will also get more space on the road. With more citizens occupying the apartment complexes in the locality, without the flyover, traffic density will drastically increase in the upcoming days," said R. Prasad, Chief Engineer, KRDCL.

The residents' group has started a petition to bring the government's attention to their problems. A member of the group also said that they will meet the Chief Minister, if need be, to stop the project.

Books invited

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Karnataka Sahitya Academy (KSA) has invited books in various categories for its annual book award for 2021. Books printed during January to December 2021 are eligible for entry.

Four copies of the book should reach the Registrar, Karnataka Sahitya Academy, Kannada Bhavana, 2nd Floor, J.C. Road, Bengaluru - 560002 by June 15.

Man ends life by drowning in sump

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A 45-year-old man allegedly ended his life by drowning in a sump near his house in Govindaraj Nagar on Wednesday. The police said Venugopal was depressed over his mother and sister ending their lives by drowning in the sump three years ago. He married five years ago, but his wife deserted him. The police found a suicide note, which stated that he was taking the step due to depression.

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph: 104 for help.)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public that My Client **Miss.Yamuna Bhaskar Surendra Babu** has intended to purchase the Schedule Property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration with its owner **Smt.G Prathibha** Residing at No.219/42, 10th main Road, 1st Block Jayanagar, Bangalore-560011, if any persons having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the Schedule Property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your claims, within **7 days** from the date of Publication of this notice, Failing which, it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by any body and my Client will proceed for completion of Sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and Parcel of the Apartment bearing **Flat No.F1 (3BHK)**, in First Floor, measuring 1500 Sq.ft., of SBA in property forming part of Apartment building known **"BALAJI MARUTI NILAYA"** the apartment constructed over the Property bearing Site No.7, Carved out of Sy.No.9/2, Situated at **Dasarahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk.**

Y. Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
Samvruddhi Legal, # 83, Ground Floor, 5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P. Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-560078.

Rail Wheel Plant,Bela
(Distt.: Saran), Bihar-841221

E-Open Tender Notice No:- SRWP/E/05/2022-23, Dated : 21.05.2022, Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the **President of India** invites **online "e-Open Tender"**, through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website **www.ireps.gov.in**, for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14:00 hrs. **SN. : 1. Tender No. :** 01215069C, **Short Description of Item :** Drag Retainer for 48 inch dia, **Quantity :** 45 nos., **Date of Tender Closing/Opening :** 27.06.2022 at 14:00 hrs., **1.** Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is **www.ireps.gov.in. 2.** The prospective firms/ bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including **Addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation** with respect to the above tender. However, this information will also be invariably published in the all concerned newspapers.

For PCMM/RWP/Bela
RWP/CPRO/Advt./2022-23/15

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing , 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383, Website : **www.kiadb.in**
No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-10/2971/2022-23 Date: 25.05.2022

SHORT-TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GoK e-Procurement Portal Only)

Tender under two cover bid system is invited for the works mentioned below as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors holding valid Class-I (Civil) issued from KPWD, Government of Karnataka who have got adequate financial resources, state-of-the-art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the following works as per the schedule given below:

Name of the work: (1) Formation of Industrial Layout including formation of 24m, 18m & 15m wide roads including asphalting, construction of RCC side drains, RCC Cross drainage work & HDPE Dual water supply pipe line of Ganajuru Block for Koluru Ganajuru Industrial Area, Haveri Taluk, Haveri District **(2)** Formation of Industrial Layout including Formation of 18m wide & 15m wide roads including asphalting, construction of RCC Side Drains, RCC Cross Drainage Works, Sump, OHT, Rising Main, Bore Well, RWH & HDPE Dual Water Supply Pipe Line at Koluru Block for Koluru Ganajuru Industrial Area, Haveri Taluk, Haveri District.

Last date for submission of bids is: **10.06.2022 upto 4:00 p.m.**

Sd/- Chief Engineer-1, K.I.A.D.B

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521
No.SEE/EE/Tr/W&M/DVG/EE/AEE-2/F-114/22-23/Cys-09 Date : 25.05.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(e-Procurement Mode only)

KPTCL, invites E-Tenders are invited in the prescribed form from Super Grade Licensed Electrical Contractor for the follwoing work. Bid enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/Tr(W&M)/DVG/EE/AEE-2/22-23/1/12.05.2022 for

1) Replacement of faulty Bus Bar protection C&R panel by new low impedance type bus bar panel. ii) Retrofitting of backup & differential relays of 3x100MVA power transformer by Numerical relays. iii) Providing dual DC source for existing C&R panels at 220/66/11kV RS Chitradurga on **Total Turnkey Basis** pertaining to Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Davangere.

Tenders will be accepted through **e-Procurement Mode** only. For further details, prospective Bidders are advised to log on to website **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** & Click on the Hyperlink **'e-Procurement-kptcl'** to participate in e-Procurement **on or after 26.05.2022.** Further details can be had from the office of the undersigned. Sd/- **Superintending Engineer (Ele),**
Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Near Stadium, Hadadi Road, Davanagere. Phone: 08192-250774

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Raju S/o. Selvaraj, R/o: No.72, Ward No.10, Near Yallamma Devi Temple Anekal, Bangalore, Anekal- 562106, changed my name to S.Justin for all purposes.

I, Amaresh Kumar S/o Raghunandan Prasad R/o 405, Aashrayaa Ruby, Senappa Layout, B'lore -76 have changed my name to Amresh Kumar vide affidavit dtd 20/05/2022 before notary Dharani. P.

I SANDHYARANI Baburao Kumbhar (spouse of Army No.10490452M Rank PTR Tushar Kumbhar) presently R/at, Vill : Kurli, PO : Kurli, Teh: Chikodi, Dist Belgaum, State : Karnataka, Pin : 591241 have changed my name from Sandhyarani Baburao Kumbhar to Sandhyarani Tushar Kumbhar vide Affidavit Dated 14.02.2022 sworn before Notary Sivakumara M N, Bengaluru.

REAL ESTATE

MILFORD APT maduravoyal chennai 1210 sq feet 77976657099 prime..

PRIME PROPERTY FOR SALE AT VARANASI CITY (UP) 13000 SQFT Serious & Genuine Buyers Only Contact Abhi: 9748829836 or SK :9839353376

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, DHEEPA Adhimoolam Thirunavukkarasu, W/O. Purushothaman Narasimhan, R/O. 304, B-Blk, SLS Sarovar Apt, 2nd Mn, Thindlu, Yelahanka, Blr-97, have changed name to Dheepa Purushothaman vide affdvit dtd 19/05/22

I, RITU Sahu, spouse of Parveen Sahu resident of SMQ 937/12, 6th camp Air force Station Jalahalli, Bangaluru-560013, have changed my Name from Ritu Sahu to Ritu vide Affidavit dated 23/05/2022 before Government of Karnataka.

I, Keval Chheda S/o Suresh Chheda, R/o: E-1139, Brigade Golden Triangle, Huskur village, Kattamnallur, Bangaluru, Karnataka - 560049, have changed my name to Keval Shah for all purposes.

I, CHANG WEI Loong alias Gavin Chang also called as Wei Loong Gavin Chang Chang D O B 27-03-1988, S/o Chang Fong Hsing, resident of Flat No. A411, Sai Krupa Heritage, Beresathya Layout, Hennur Main Road, Hennur Bende, Bengaluru-560043, have changed my name to Wei Loong Gavin Chang vide affidavit dt: 25-05-2022 sworn to before Notary A.R.Muneer Ahmed, B'luru.

BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004
E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Maintenance, BLW, Varanasi acting or and on behalf of President of India Invites open E-Tenders for the following work. **S.No.** 1., **Tender No.** EL/1077/W-1145 R-2, **Name of Work:** Booster Pumping installation for workshop Fire Hydrant System., **Approximate Cost** ₹: 5440306.40,, **Completion Period:** 09 Months, **Tender Opening date and time:** 15.06.2022 at 15.30hrs. For details and to participate e-tender please visit Indian railways website : **www.ireps.gov.in.**

P.R./BLW/E-02 Distt. Electrical Engineer/Maintenance
/blwvaranasi "वेबसाईट:-blw.indianrailways.gov.in"

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA.
Public Works Department.
Executive Engineer, Public Works Divison,
Amalner- 425401
Phone No. 02587-224112 / email-amalner.ee@mahapwd.com

E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 11 FOR-2022-2023

Online Tenders (e-tender) in "B-1" form for **01 (One) Roads Works** are invited by the Executive Engineer, P.W. Division, Amalner for and behalf of Government of Maharashtra, Electronic Tender Management System, **http://mahatenders.gov.in** from Reputed and experienced firms / Contractors who fulfil the terms and condition of tender and having experience of similar type of work. The rights are reserve to reject all or any tender by Superitending Engineer/ Executive Engineer. Conditional tenders are not acceptable.

The details can be viewed and downloaded online from dated **26/05/2022 to 21/06/2022 at 17.00** Hrs. directly from the Government of Maharashtra e-tendering Portal **http://mahatenders.gov.in** This detailed tender notice is available on portal **http://mahatenders.gov.in**, also on www.mahapwd.com and on Notice Board of the Office of Executive Engineer, Public Works Division, Amalner

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Public Works Divison, Amalner
DGIPR/2022/2023/867

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of Health Officer, Bommanahalli Zone,
Begur Main Road, Bengaluru - 560 068.
No.: HO/BOM/PR/06/2022-23 Date: 24.05.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK e-Procurement Portal only)

The Health Officer, Bommanahalli Zone, invites tenders from eligible tenderers for the services detailed in the table below:

Sl. No.	Name of the work
1.	Providing Manpower and Equipments to Mosquito control in Ward Nos. 174 (HSR), Ward No-175 (Bommanahalli) Ward No-186 (Jaraganahalli), Ward No-187 (Puttenahalli), Ward No-188 (Bilekahalli), Ward No-189 (Hongasandra), Ward No-190 (Mangammanapalya), Ward No-193 (Arekere), Ward No-196 (Anjanapura), Ward No-194 (Gottigere) Ward No-195 (Konankunte), Ward No-191 (Singasandra), Ward No-184 (Uttarahalli), Ward No-197 (Vasanthapura) & Ward No-185 (Yelachenahalli) on out source basis.
2	Providing 2-Auto with 2-driver and 2-MC Spray Man for mosquito control activity (Fogging, Power spraying, source reduction IEC-for Bangalore South Constituency and Bommanahalli Constituency.

1) Tender documents may be downloaded from e-procurement portal from : **27.05.2022 onwards. 2)** Last date and time for uploading Online Queries: **31.05.2022 upto 3.00 p.m. 3)** Pre bid meeting : **01.06.2022 at 11.30 a.m. 4)** Last date for submission of tenders: **08.06.2022 upto 4.00 p.m. 5)** Date of opening of Tenders: **09.06.2022 at 4.30 p.m.** Further details can be accessed from GoK e-procurement website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Health Officer, Bommanahalli Zone.

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

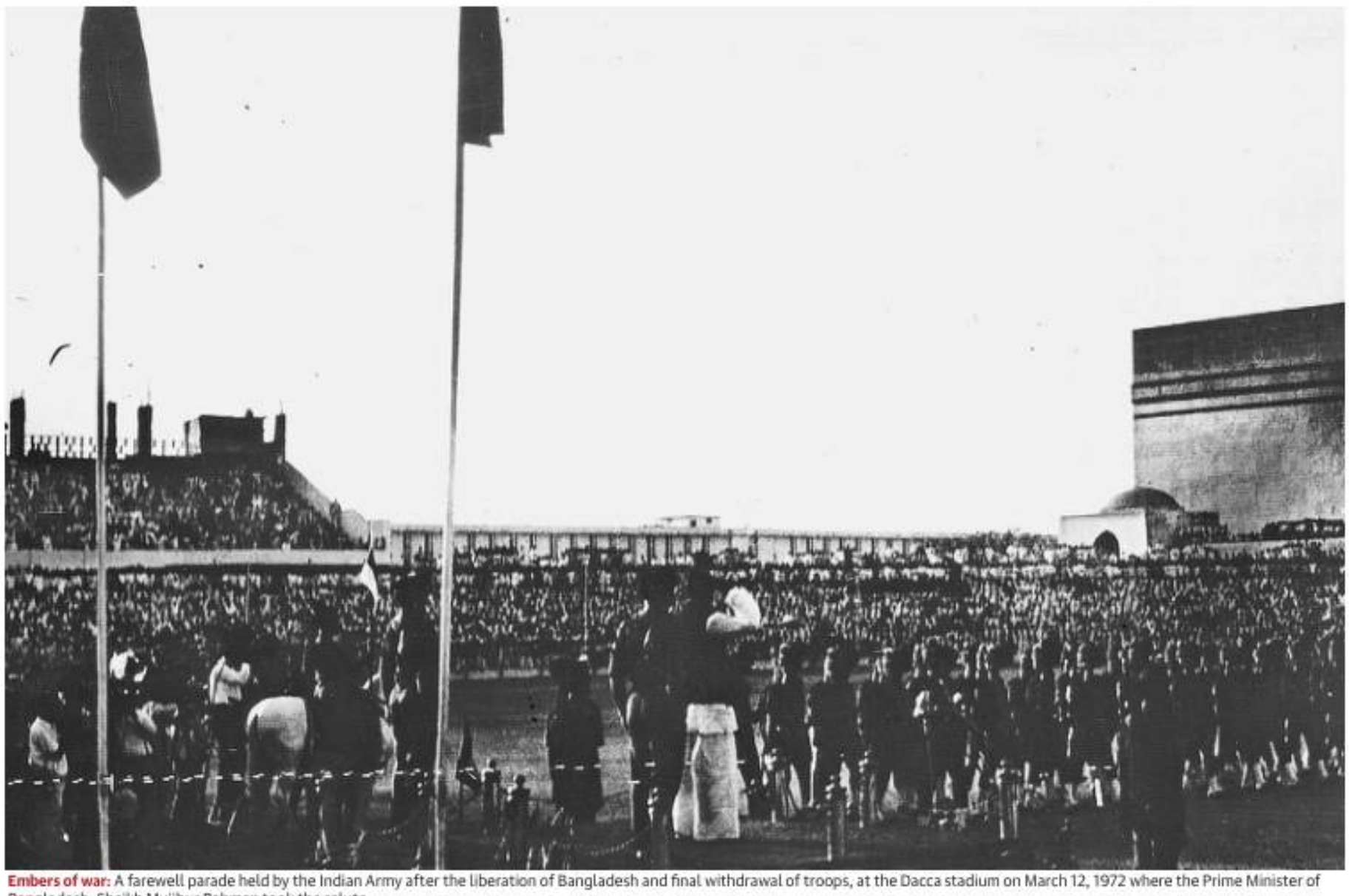
GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
KARNATAKA FOREST DEPARTMENT
Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests
Bangalore Urban Division, Aranya Bhavan Campus, 18th cross, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru-560003. Ph No. 080-23343464, Email ID – dcfurban82@yahoo.co.in
No. A9/Tree Cutting/CR-264/2021-22 Date: 25-05-2022

BRIEF RE-SALE NOTIFICATION

It is hereby notified for the general information of the public that **540 standing trees on Right and Left-road side of Karmelaram to Baiyappanahalli section in connection with Baiyappanahalli-Hosur Doubling Project** as mentioned below will be sold by e-tender-cum-auction mode through MSTC Ltd., on the online platform **"www.mstcecommerce.com"**.The sale conducting authority is Deputy Conservator of Forests, Bengaluru (Urban) Division Bengaluru. The e-tender-cum auction is subject to terms and conditions uploaded on the website **www.mstcecommerce.com**
Date of e-tender-cum-auction : **31st May 2022**
Mode: Online-**www.mstcecommerce.com**
Time : **11:00 a.m to 3:00 p.m**
No.of trees: **540**
Approximate value: **Above Rs.20.00 Lakhs**
Inspection by the bidders : **25-05-2022 to 30-05-2022 11.00 am to 4.00 pm at Right and Left-road side of Karmelaram to Baiyappanahalli section.**
Conditions: (1) Interested bidders should get themselves Registered with MSTC well in advance. **(2)** Intended bidders are advised to inspect the material to their satisfaction **(3)** The Quantity notified adjacent to each class kept for sale is approximate **(4)** Every Registered bidders shall pay an Earnest money deposit (EMD) of **Rs.25,000/-** for all lots/or any lot. **(5)** The black listed bidders, defaulters, Minors, insolvent persons will not be permitted to participate in the sale. **(6)** Detailed Sale Conditions to be downloaded from **www.mstcecommerce.com.**

Sd/-
Deputy Conservator of Forests,
Bangalore Urban Division, Bangalore.
DIPR/CP/658/Zerikar/2022-23

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene



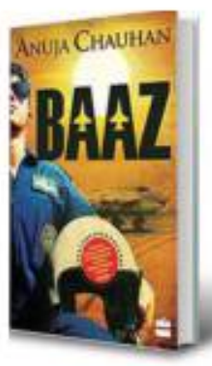
Embers of war: A farewell parade held by the Indian Army after the liberation of Bangladesh and final withdrawal of troops, at the Dacca stadium on March 12, 1972 where the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took the salute. • HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

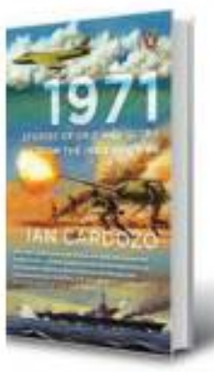
BIBLIOGRAPHY

The road to Dhaka

A mix of stories that recount the horror of battle and the triumph of the human spirit during the 1971 Indo-Pak War

DEEPA ALEXANDER





Remembrance is a great military virtue. Whether it is regimental day when old officers share weepy plaudits of the Sikh soldiers they commanded, the Gnat on display that has earned its place in the centre of the squadron mess for bringing down enemy Sabre jets, or the undying esprit de corps, the Indian armed forces know how to do it.

Their stories from the numerous wars and counter-insurgency operations have often been relegated only to unit records, but once in a while a book recording all this gleans through the cracks. Here's a list of fiction and non-fiction books that celebrates the Indian soldier, sailor and airman in the 51st year of the third Indo-Pak War.

Documenting stories of war

In *1971: Charge of the Gorkhas* (Penguin), Rachna Bisht Rawat unearths stories of the strange bonds that war forges. As the distance between the extraordinary generation that fought the war that created Bangladesh and a generation that struggles to remember it widens, she tells the story with a sense of urgency, given that the men who fought it are now in the evening of their lives. Through a series of interviews and constructed action sequences , Rachna throws light on some of the well-known and not-so-well-known battles in riveting prose. A quaint tale that will stay with you is 'A Strange Gift', the one that Capt. Dr. David Masilamani received for Christmas from the soldiers of the 10 Sikh Light Infantry. But it is the stories of the prisoners of war (POW) – their loves, loss and the sense of no closure for their families as time ticks – that Rachna tells both poetically and poignantly.

On POWs, the seminal work to read is Chander Suta Dogra's *Missing in Action: The Prisoners Who Never Came Back* (HarperCollins). Deeply researched, it looks at an oft neglected aspect of war, one that outlives the glory of victory. Dogra looks at men who disappeared in enemy territory while on daring missions between 1965 and 1971. "The wars ended but for their next of kin, the battle had just begun," she writes, painstakingly constructing the stories of 83 men believed missing in action.

Some of the stories of POWs ended well, although the road to happiness was strewn with courage, devilry and impeccable planning to attempt the great escape. Dhirendra S. Jafa's *Death Wasn't Painful: Stories of Indian Fighter Pilots from the 1971 War* (Sage) is the account of an Indian fighter pilot taken as a POW and lodged in a Rawalpindi camp. He was with a group of 12 pilots who had been shot down, beaten and deprived of food and medical assistance. Yet, they had built bonds with their captors, discussing Partition, dictatorship, democracy, their common past and separate futures. The declaration that they were POW ensured that they headed home over the course of two years, and the photographs of their homecoming in Delhi's Palam is enough to stir the spirit.

Four Miles to Freedom (Penguin Random House India) by Canadian writer Faith Johnston is a gripping read, recounting the escape from Rawalpindi of Indian POWs, Flt Lt Dilip Parulkar, Malvinder Singh Grewal and Harish Singhji. Sometimes amusing, sometimes chilling, the book recounts how eight men helped them escape and the wild journey they make traversing the North West Frontier via Jamrud and Peshawar to Landi Kotal near the Khyber, in disguise.

Of bonds made and unmade

The story of how Major Ian Cardozo stepped on a landmine in the final days of the war, amputated his own leg , asked his batman to bury it, and then was operated upon by a Pakistani doctor who had been taken as a POW has found its way into the annals of Indian military history. *1971: Stories of Grit and Glory from The Indo-Pak War* (Penguin) is Cardozo's telling of the war: he is a remarkable scene setter with his sketches adding an old-world flavour to the book. Like a battlefield tour guide he draws the reader's attention to the bravery of both sides throwing the spotlight on the last khukri attack in modern military history and a legendary map that now hangs at the United Service Institution . In these pages you read of men who slashed their way through tropical jungles, enemy lines and in Cardozo's case, his own leg now buried in the mud of a forgotten field.

Cactus Country (Roli), Manohar Malgonkar's saga of valour, shifting loyalties, love and loss takes the novel to the other side. It is the story of Aslam Chisti, a Pakistani officer taken prisoner by Bangladeshi guerrillas.

Then, he falls in love with a Bengali princess in whose house he is placed under house arrest. Malgonkar's win is his charming descriptive prose, describing the beauty of Bangladesh – its flood plains swollen both by the monsoon and the bloodshed– with as much fervour as he does Aslam's love.

Stories of loss and love

The House on Mall Road (Penguin) is Mohyna Srinivasan's tribute to the steel core that lies at the heart of every fauji family. Parvati, the protagonist of the novel, loses her mother and grandmother on a night of bombing while her father, an Army officer deployed in Kashmir, also goes missing. When she returns to her house on 169, The Mall, 20 years later, its walls bent with the weight of history, she rediscovers a nostalgic past and a web of lies that changes her present.

When Anuja Chauhan's *Baaz* (HarperCollins) opens, India is still a young republic and the dashing Flying Officer Ishaan 'Baaz' Faujdar is still a child. How he goes from a boy who swam with buffalos in a slime pond, to flying Gnats in the Battle of Boyra, while falling in love with the posh Tehmina Dadyseth is told in Anuja's trademark language.

Behind all the funny escapades that underline the couple's class divide lies a story of a war hero that leaves you wanting more, long after the last bullet has been fired, and the last page turned.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Two days after 52-year old Viswanathan Anand finished second in the Superbet Rapid & Blitz tournament, 16 year old R Praggnanandhaa reached the final of the Meltwater Champions Chess tour (online). Here's a quiz on young achievers in sport

1 One of the players who was defeated by young "Pragg" in the preliminary rounds of the Meltwater tour is also currently a U.S. player who achieved the feat of being the youngest to become a grandmaster. Name him.

2 By far, among the most popular athletes representing her sport, she made the historic mark of scoring a perfect 10 at a young age of 14 in the Montreal Olympics. Name this Romanian five-time Olympic gold medallist.

3 The winner of a bevy of awards for the best performer among youthful footballers for his outstanding performances for the teams he played for in 2021, this Canary Islands born midfielder won the Young Player of the Tournament award in Euro 2020. Name this midfield maestro.

4 When Sachin Tendulkar made his Test debut at Karachi aged 16 years, yet another (then) teenager made his debut and made an immediate mark picking up four wickets in the first innings of the Test match and later went on to become a fast bowling legend. Name him.

5 This Swiss player still holds the record of being the youngest (in the Open era) to win a Grand Slam singles tournament and becoming the youngest World No 1. Name her.

◄ Identify this diver who holds the record for being the youngest to win an Olympic gold (set in 1936). • WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The first human spaceflight programme of the U.S. **Ans: Project Mercury**
2. The space probe by NASA with the mission of making observations of the outer corona of the Sun. **Ans: Parker Solar Probe**
3. The name of the spacecraft which took Kalpana Chawla to space and disintegrated on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. **Ans: Space Shuttle Columbia**
4. This satellite was a collaborative project between NASA, the U.K.'s SERC, and the European Space Agency. **Ans: International Ultraviolet Explorer**
5. The name of the American space launch vehicle used to launch Explorer 1. **Ans: Juno I**
6. The first human spaceflight mission of the Chinese space programme. **Ans: Shenzhou 5**
7. The first U.S. space station, launched by NASA. **Ans: Skylab**
8. The youngest woman in space. **Ans: Valentina Tereshkova**

Early Birds: Manisha Sharma| Amisha Sharma| Jayanta Dey| Piyal Kanti Ghosh

Compiled by: Srinivasan Ramani

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning."

"What's the difference between 'rather' and 'fairly' sir?"

"Rather generally goes with a negative idea and 'fairly' is associated with a positive one. This is the general rule. There are always exceptions!

He is rather ill.
He is rather talkative.
He is rather stupid.
They look rather tired.
I am afraid the coffee is rather cold.
The exams were fairly easy.
I know him fairly well.
He is fairly reliable.
The room is fairly clean.
The food is fairly good.

When you say 'it's fairly warm' you mean that warmth is pleasant, 'it is rather warm' means that it is a little too warm. I hope my explanation is fairly satisfactory."

"How do you use 'asleep' and 'sleeping', sir?"

"*You fall asleep.*
You are sound asleep.
You are fast asleep.

You use 'asleep' when you want to refer to the state or condition a person is in. 'Sleeping' refers to the activity.

He is sleeping.
He is sleeping soundly.
He is sleeping like a log.

Notice you can't say 'you are asleep fast' nor can you say 'he is soundly sleeping.'

The moment he touched the pillow, he fell asleep.

Here you can't say 'he was sleeping'."

"What is the meaning of 'I met a Mr. Sarma yesterday', sir?'

'I met Mr. Sarma means that the Mr. Sarma you met was known to you. He was not a stranger. I met a Mr. Sarma means that the Mr. Sarma you met was a stranger to you. Maybe he was introduced to you by somebody or you met him most accidentally. You use 'a' when the person is a stranger to you."

"What's the difference between 'he feared her' and 'he feared for her,' sir?"

" 'He feared her' means he was afraid of her.

He fears dogs and monkeys.

'He feared for her' means he was worried about her safety. He was concerned about her.

She feared for the little boy who ran across the road.

You know what 'afraid of' means. Some writers use 'afraid for' in the sense of 'fear for'. The following piece of dialogue is from *The Complaisant Lover* by Graham Greene. Act 1, scene 1.

Victor: Now did I or did I not, lock the back door?

Mary: What are you afraid for, Victor? There's no old family silver.

Victor: Well, there's always a little cash lying around

I hope the meaning of 'afraid for' is clear to you now."

"Yes, sir, What's the meaning of 'he is resting on his laurels,' sir?"

" 'To rest on one's laurels' means 'to cease to strive for further glory.' When a man is content with his achievements and does not attempt to achieve more, you say 'he is resting on his laurels.' In ancient Greece, the winner in a competition was crowned with laurel leaves: A laurel is a small tree whose leaves do not fall in winter. Let's stop here. Goodbye."

"Thank you, sir. Goodbye."

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, MAY. 26
RISE 05:53 SET 18:41
RISE 02:57 SET 15:24

FRIDAY, MAY. 27
RISE 05:53 SET 18:41
RISE 03:34 SET 16:12

SATURDAY, MAY. 28
RISE 05:53 SET 18:41
RISE 04:12 SET 17:01

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	25
Mysuru	33	19
Bengaluru	30	22

Bengaluru Today
29°C The weather will be slight warm but humid. Night will be pleasant.Chances of moderate rain and thundershower.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
30°C A slight warm but humid weather to continue. Night will be comfortable. Spell of rain and thundershower to occur.

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Outbound travel gets more expensive as the rupee falls

But domestic tourism gains, having surpassed pre-pandemic levels in March

K.C. DEEPIKA
BENGALURU

After international flights resumed earlier this year, outbound tourism looked set to take off from the two-year slumber.

For many, tourism is a luxury. But after two pandemic-and-lockdown-hit years, "revenge tourism" – as it has come to be known – has made its presence felt.

After international flights resumed earlier this year, outbound tourism looked set to take off from the two-year slumber. However, with the free fall of the rupee, travel has gotten expensive and in some cases, pushed up demand for domestic travel.

Prahlad Krishnamurthy, CBO, Cleartrip, said while the rupee's fall definitely has impacted outbound tourism to some extent in the short term, as holidaying outside India has become expensive, the pent-up demand owing to revenge travel and the easing of COVID-19 restrictions by countries are acting as a strong tailwind for outbound tourism.

Long-haul destinations like Europe, Australia, the United States of America, and south-east Asia have become more expensive, but this will ease out once more capacity is introduced by airlines, after a correction in the oil prices, and stability in the rupee, he added.

"Domestic tourism has done relatively well, but there has been a steep rise in domestic airfares too due to high oil prices. Inbound tourism has been steady and there is good demand across destinations like Goa, Srinagar, Jaipur," said Mr. Krishnamurthy.

INFLATION IMPACT

Rajeev Kale, president and country head, Holidays, MICE, Visa-Thomas Cook (India) Limited, said the rupee movement is not a new phenomenon, and despite depreciation against the U.S. dollar, travel is clearly non-negotiable for Indians, more so, with strong pent-up demand this year.

"Indians are smart travellers, and managing their travel budget involves a mere readjustment: curtailing expenses on shopping and dining in favour of must-do experiences/sightseeing. In addition, customers are also open to a shift in destinations to those that are easier on the wallet or countries where the rupee shows appreciation. Payment for cruises and international rail travel can be made in Indian rupees and are great value savers; also travel passes, like the Swiss Pass, offer great all-included transport options to stretch a traveller's budget," he explained.

The upside of a depreciating rupee, he said, is the strong fillip to domestic tourism, and having already surpassed pre-pandemic levels in March, there is significant uptick with week-on-week growth, he added.

Travellers who had bought international holidays well in advance with special discounts and offers are also not impacted by the current fluctuation in the rupee, said Daniel D'Souza, president and country head - Holidays, SOTC Travel.

"We continue to witness a significant uptick in demand for Europe and reopened short-haul destinations with increased relaxation in restrictions like Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, and also South Africa," he said, also agreeing that a fluctuating rupee is putting India back into the spotlight, with Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Ladakh, the north-east, Goa, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands driving demand.

Sanjar Imam, from the Karnataka Tourism Forum, said overall, inflation and the fall of the rupee have not made a major dent in tourism because of two reasons: one, it is not a significant amount as far as international travel is concerned – a traveller will not mind paying 5% more for a trip worth ₹5 lakh, and second, because of the pent-up demand towards travel.

Different packages

"There are different price packages for Asia, Europe etc., so people choose based on their budget. Domestic travel has been picking up since last year. If you look at the percentage change of rupee devalued, it is not huge from last year. Once people make up their mind to travel, they won't change for a little extra. They will check the price today and then take a call, not use a benchmark from two years ago," he added.

Domestic help kills senior citizen at his apartment to rob valuables

Chamarajpet police launches manhunt for accused

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Jugraj Jain was murdered at his flat in Chamarajpet.

A 74-year-old businessman was brutally murdered allegedly by his domestic help at his apartment, who then ransacked the apartment and escaped with valuables on Tuesday night.

The deceased Jugraj Jain was living with his younger son and family at an apartment in Chamarajpet and owned an electrical appliance shop in Chickpet.

The family had hired Bijaram from Rajasthan as domestic help six months ago. On Tuesday, Jugraj was alone as his family had gone to visit relatives. The murder came to light when one of the relatives called Jugraj to check on him, but there was no response. He informed the elder son Prakash Chand, who rushed to the house and found the door locked .

With the help of a key maker, the door was opened and they found Jugraj lying in the bathroom gagged and with his hands and legs tied .

Prakash Chand, with the help of others, untied Jugraj and alerted the police. The police found that the wardrobes and the house were ransacked and valuables and cash were missing along with Bijaram. The Chamarajpet police have launched a massive manhunt to track down Bijaram.

A retired IAF pilot and his wife were found murdered in their villa in Eagleton Golf Village at Bidadi on the western outskirts of Bengaluru in February this year. The police arrested the caretaker, Joginder Singh.

Fake ACB officer harasses Education Dept. official

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Vidhana Soudha police are on the lookout for a conman who, posing as the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Anti-Corruption Bureau, threatened to conduct a raid and demanded money.

Based on the complaint by M. Dhananjay, Under Secretary to Government, Education Department, the police have registered an FIR against the unknown man, charging him under extortion and impersonation.

Mr. Dhananjay told the police that the accused called his official number on Monday introducing himself as Dy.SP and informed that he is going to raid his office and residence. The accused said that the ACB has registered an FIR against him based on the complaint by DDPIs and BEOs under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The accused dropped the names of senior ACB officials and even the Education Minister and his personal assistant. He also advised him to buy a gift for the inquiry officer of the case. Mr. Dhananjay later spoke to his colleagues who told him that the accused had called them too with the same offer.

Mr. Dhananjay approached the police and filed a case.

Only 27% of 166 govt. hospitals complete fire safety audits

Hospitals had been asked to submit reports by May 21

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

Over two weeks after the Health Department directed 166 district and taluk hospitals to conduct fire safety audits, not more than 44 healthcare facilities (27%) have completed the exercise. Following the tardy progress, the May 21 deadline to submit the audit reports has now been extended till the end of the month.

At the videoconference with Chief Ministers of all States on April 27, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had suggested that all States should conduct fire safety audits in hospitals as fire accidents had increased due to summer heat.

Following which, State Health Commissioner Randeep D. issued an order on May 7 directing 16 district and 150 taluk hospitals to conduct the audits and receive an NOC from the State Fire and Emergency Services Department. The hospitals had been asked to submit reports by May 21.

Subsequently, the Health Department approved ₹82 lakh for the fire audits of 166 hospitals (at ₹50,000 each hospital) under the National Health Mission (NHM) and the funds were released on May 18. So far, only 44 of the 166 hospitals (27%) have got the fire audit done. As per district-wise data, the exercise has been completed in all identified hospitals in five districts - Bengaluru Rural (four hospitals), Chikkamagaluru (7), Dakshina Kannada (5), Davangere (6), and Udupi (3).

With none of the identified hospitals having started the exercise, implementation is zero in 14 districts, including Bengaluru Urban. While one of the two hospitals in Kodagu has completed the audit, three out of seven hospitals in Hassan and four out of 10 hospitals in Uttara Kannada also have a fire safety NOC now. The progress is ranging between 11% and 43% in the remaining districts.

Procedural delays

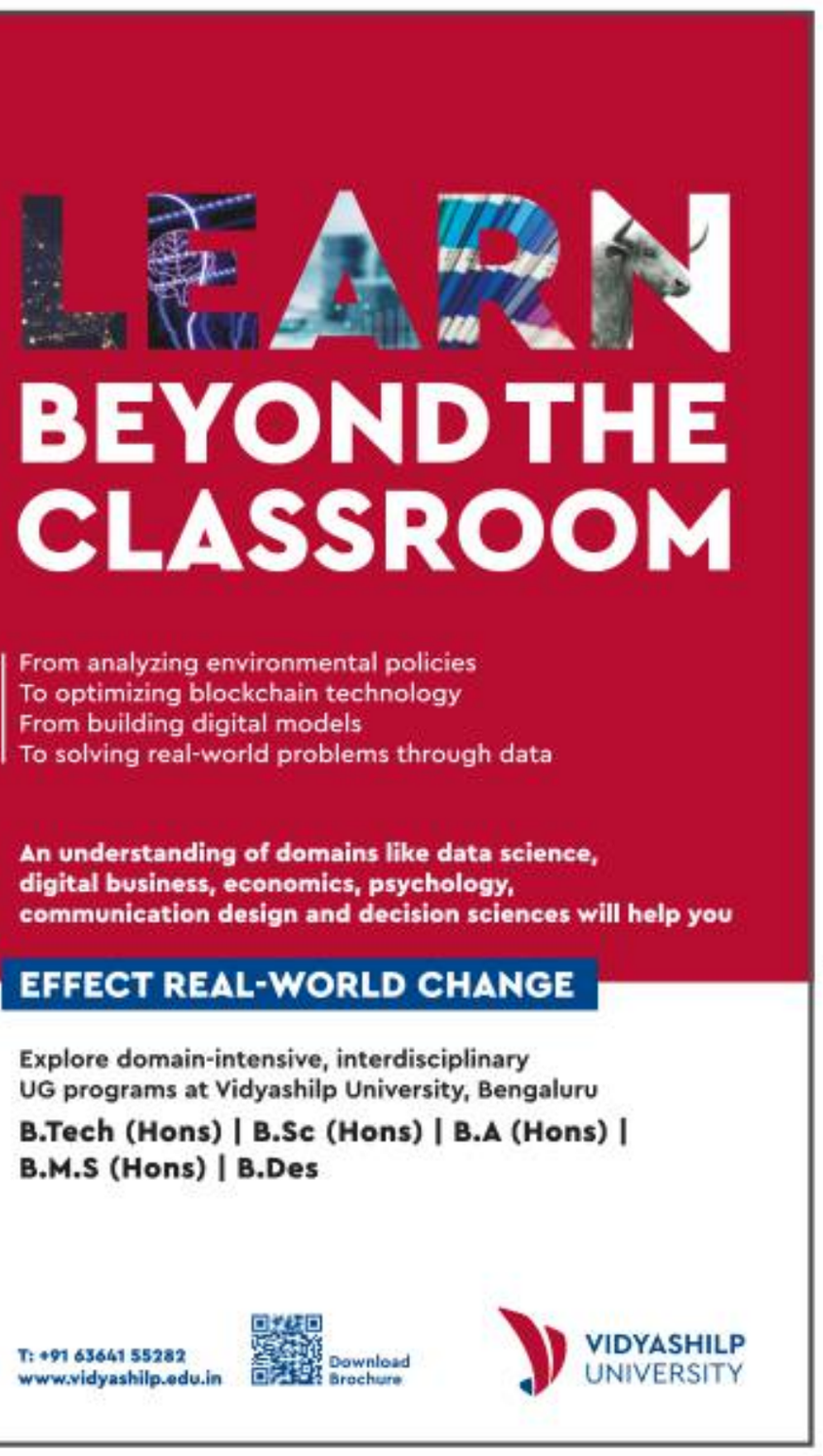
Mr. Randeep attributed the tardy progress of audits in the hospitals to procedural delays. "Funds have been released to the 166 hospitals and the DHOs have been asked to facilitate the audit of hospitals in their districts by the end of this month. So far, 44 hospitals have completed the audits," he said.

"The recent incidents of fire accidents in hospitals have reinforced the need for compliance with fire safety measures in hospitals across the State," he added.

C.N. Manjunath, director of the State-run Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, said lack of fire safety puts the lives of immobile patients at risk.

"Hospitals have a multitude of flammable materials, each with different degrees of combustibility, each reacting differently to heat and fire. It is mandatory for hospitals to have smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, a fire escape route plan, fire exit LED signages with two hours power backup, fluorescent arrow directions and adequate space for fire tenders to operate," he said.

Besides, all electrical and electronic installations need to be sequestered and fireproofed.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Training for 'highest marathon in the world'

City runners look forward to Ladakh marathon which will be held from September 7 to 11

TANIA ANNY
BENGALURU

A group of Bengalureans are preparing for a marathon in the tough conditions in Leh, capital of the Union Territory of Ladakh.

There are marathons, and then there is the Ladakh Marathon. Touted by the organisers to be the highest and amongst the toughest marathons comprising two ultra races - the 72-km Khardung La Challenge (5370 m) – the world's highest ultra marathon – and the 122-km Silk Route Ultra – the 'epitome of high-altitude running testing the limits of human endurance'.

Back after two years, the marathon will be held from September 7 to 11. Marathon runners in Bengaluru are training hard for the event.

Asif Ahmed, 37, an IT professional, said acclimatising to the climate and altitude is a necessity. He is focusing on training in the hills and is travelling to Ooty and Kodaikanal in Tamil Nadu, and increasing the mileage gradually. "If someone is a seasoned runner or ultra distance runner, six months training is enough," he said, but added that 'Ladakh is more difficult because of the altitude, temperature, and harsh weather'.

"We need extra preparation. The mental aspect is very important in ultra-running and the Khardung La Challenge. Mental preparation is the decisive factor between being a finisher or ending up as DNF (did not finish). The main factor is acclimatisation of altitude slowly," said Asif, who participated in the 2017 Ladakh Marathon and is preparing for this year's event.

The organisers, on their website, have pointed out that unlike other marathons, the Ladakh Marathon requires participants to arrive in Leh at least a week in advance to acclimatise for race day. "You are running at 3500 m above sea level. So, it is imperative that you get acclimatised to the high altitude," they add.

Participants must have finished two full marathons under five hours in the past three years, or two ultra marathons over 70 km in the past three years prior to the race day, which is the basic eligibility criteria to participate in the Khardung La Challenge.

Darshan Jain, founder of running group ODUBA, which provides training for beginners and intermediate runners, said approximately 40 participants from Bengaluru are going to participate in this year's Ladakh marathon. "The marathon date is usually declared one year before so that participants can prepare with several training sessions. Unlike other marathons, Ladakh marathon participants also need to arrive in Ladakh a week in advance to acclimatise for race day, easy run and get used to the weather," he explained.

Dharmendra Kumar, 43, founder and coach of Protons Sports, Bengaluru, who participated in the Ladakh marathon seven times in a row from 2013 to 2019, is going to participate this year too. He is also coaching people to run ultra marathons. "The main challenge in Ladakh is that the environment is not friendly and unpredictable. For Khardung La marathon, we are up at more than 18,000 feet from the base; it is a hilly and rocky area, also cold. In Bengaluru, there is no similar place to practise. Everything in Ladakh is at a high altitude, oxygen levels are less. We cannot train for weather; the only thing we can train is for mileage," he said.

Ashwini Bhatt, 36, who is a professional running coach, had participated in the ultra marathon in 2018 and 2019. She said earlier, most people would be scared to participate in the Ladakh marathon.

"I had been to Ladakh before participating in the marathon. Mindset is important. It's true that running in Ladakh requires 30% more effort than in other cities. Whoever is going there to run, give yourself enough time to adjust with the weather and ensure you are hydrated. As a woman, I never faced any kind of differentiation there. I finished second in the 2019 Khardung La Challenge," she said.

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NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (NIT) (Through e-procurement portal)
No. BESCOM/CGM(Proj)/DGM-3/AGM/BC-14/22-23/967 Date: 25-05-2022

BESCOM invites Tenders for **Providing electrical infrastructure to regularized Un authorized IP sets by extending 11KV lines, erection of 25KVA 4 star rated Distribution Transformers and extension of LT line 3 phase 4 wire on Total Turnkey basis under item wise fixed price contract for a period of Two years on Percentage Quoting Basis in the following tender enquiries.**

Sl.	Enq. No's	Name of the Sub Division
1	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/SBR/22-23/TTK-01	Santhebennur
2	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/CHA/22-23/TTK-02	Channagiri
3	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/DVGR/22-23/TTK-03	Davanagere Rural
4	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/AGU/22-23/TTK-04	Anagodu
5	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/JGR/22-23/TTK-05	Jagaluru
6	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/HRA/22-23/TTK-06	Harihara
7	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/HON/22-23/TTK-07	Honnali
8	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/NYM/22-23/TTK-08	Nyamthi
9	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/HRP/22-23/TTK-09	Harapanahalli
10	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/TEL/22-23/TTK-10	Teligi
11	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/CTAR/22-23/TTK-11	Chitradurga Rural
12	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/HOL/22-23/TTK-12	Holalkere
13	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/HOS/22-23/TTK-13	Hosadurga
14	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/SRP/22-23/TTK-14	Srirampura
15	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/HIR/22-23/TTK-15	Hiriyuru
16	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/CHA/22-23/TTK-16	Challakere
17	BESCOM/CGM(P)/UNIP/BC-14/THA/22-23/TTK-17	Thallak

Availability of Bid documents : 30.05.2022. 17:00 Hrs onwards. **Last date for bid submission :** 29.06.2022 at 17:00 Hrs. **Opening of Technical Bids :** 01.07.2022 at 11:00 Hrs. **Pre-Bid meeting** : 14.06.2022 at 11:00 Hrs. **Last date for submission of Queries :** 09.06.2022 before 17:00 Hrs. **Venue :** Belaku Bhavana, Block-II, Corporate office, BESCOM, K. R Circle, Bangalore-560 001.
The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through the e-procurement portal from the website **http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in E-procurement Help Desk: Phone No: +91-8046010000 +91-8022631200 E-mail: support@ihelpdsk.com** Aspiring bidders need to be registered on e-procurement portal. Bidders can take the assistance from the e-procurement during working hours.

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Delayed road widening turns stretch near Hubballi into death trap

Bid to widen the bypass to be opened on June 3

GIRISH PATTANASHETTI
HUBBALLI

The death of eight persons in the accident on the Hubballi-Dharwad bypass (NH4) has once again brought to light the delay in the widening of the around 30-km two-lane stretch which has almost become a "death trap".

It was in January that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) floated the tender to convert the 31-km long two-lane bypass between Hubballi and Dhawad into a six-lane expressway and for two-lane service road on each side.

Subsequently, on February 28, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for the work and heaped praises on Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi for finding a solution for the complicated road-widening project.

However, even as elected representatives keep visiting hospitals to console the grieving family members of the accident victims, the reality is that the bids are yet to be opened. On Tuesday evening, district in-charge Minister for Dharwad Halappa Achar, after a meeting with NHAI officials, told mediapersons that the bids would be opened on June 3.

As per the tender conditions, a time of two-and-a-half years has been fixed for completion of the project after the work orders are issued, which is yet to happen. However, if Mr. Achar is to be believed, the term is two years and efforts would be made to complete the work even before that. Considering the laidback attitude, it seems an improbability as of now.

Around 390 deaths

Nandi Highway Developers Ltd. laid the 29.04-km bypass between Gabbur Cross in Hubballi and Narendra Cross in Dharwad in 1998 and maintains it. As per a rough estimate, 390 people have lost their life and 300 have become disabled in around 1,200 accidents on the stretch in the last 12 years.

The bypass is a bottleneck as two six-lane roads on either ends (Dharwad and Hubballi) are squeezed into a two-lane bypass. While roads on either side got widened but the bypass has remained as it is since 1998, making it dangerous for travellers. Demand for road widening through agitations went unheeded for years.

It was only after the intervention of the Supreme Court, following the accident which claimed the lives of 11 women from Davangere last year, that finally the elected representatives and officials woke up. But it still took close to a year to start the tendering process.

Advocate and KPCC media analyst P.H. Neeralakeri, who had launched an agitation for road widening, blames the government entirely for the deaths. His allegation is that it is not technical issues but the discussion "to fix the percentage of commission" which is delaying initiating the work.

As of now, it seems unlikely that the work will start next month. Even after the bids are opened and finalised, it may take another month before the work orders are issued, admit officials. And the acquisition of 31 acres of land for the project is likely to take three months to complete if there is no technical glitch.

The project cost

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HUBBALLI

The total cost of the proposed project is ₹1,200 crore. The Union Government has sanctioned ₹800 crore for the six-lane expressway and the four-lane service road and another ₹400 crore for land acquisition, DPR preparation, and allied works.

In focus again: A file photo of the mangled remains of a mini-bus being shifted after an accident on Hubballi-Dharwad bypass. As per a rough estimate, 390 people have died in around 1,200 accidents on the stretch in the last 12 years.

Congress to hold conventions of various communities in districts

Party also plans to hold 'Na Nayaki' meets to attract women

NAGESH PRABHU
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Congress has decided to hold conventions of various communities, including minorities, other backward classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in all districts of the State to mobilise people towards the party ahead of the 2023 Assembly elections.

The party held a district-level convention of Madivala community and minorities last Sunday in Tumakuru and it was attended by Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president D.K. Shivakumar and senior leaders of the district. The party would hold an SC/ST convention in Ballari next month, said sources in the party. Various cells of the party have been given the task of making arrangements for holding district-level conventions.

D.K. Shivakumar

- 'Conventions will help party in identifying candidates in advance based on local issues'
- 'They will also help assess party's strength in different regions of the State'
- Hariprasad to lead 33-member State-level Nav Sankalp Shivir Committee

To gauge leaders

The district-level conventions would help the party in identifying leaders' mass support and organising skills ahead of the elections. They would help the party in identifying candidates in advance based on local issues. They would also provide a platform for leaders to join the Congress, a leader said.

The party is also planning to hold 'Na Nayaki' (I am leader) conventions targeting women, who form nearly 50% of voters. The aim of these conventions was to assess the party's strength in different regions of the State, sources said.

All these events, sources said, would enable senior leaders to prepare a blueprint for the Assembly elections and help candidates identify gaps in mobilisation of people in local settings.

Other than these events, the party's local leaders have been told to constitute booth-level committees before the end of this month. Party workers would be trained in monitoring booths under 'Namma boothu, namma mathadaana' prorgramme.

Chintan Shivir

Meanwhile, the KPCC has also decided to hold a State-level Chintan Shivir in Bengaluru on June 1 and 2, on the lines of the national-level shivir conducted in Udaipur, Rajasthan, a few days ago.

Mr. Shivakumar has set up a 33-member State-level Nav Sankalp Shivir Committee headed by senior party leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council B.K. Hariprasad to coordinate activities for the conduct of State-level Chintan Shivir in Bengaluru. It has also been assigned the responsibility of taking the Udaipur Nav Sankalp Declaration of the party to the districts.

The committee has been given the job of preparing programmes to be conducted in Bengaluru on the culmination of 75th years of the country's independence, preparation of a plan of action for filling vacancies at panchayat, block, district, and State levels in the next 90 to 180 days, and constitution of a political affairs committee for deliberating on important political issues and drive a common political line of the party, said a KPCC communication.

KPCC working president Ramalinga Reddy has been appointed as convener of the committee.

Ikea store to open in Bengaluru next month

Company to invest nearly ₹1,000 crore in the store

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Jester Brodin, CEO of Ingka Group (Ikea), on Wednesday, met Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai at the World Economic Forum meet in Davos and held discussions in the backdrop of an Ikea store being opened in Bengaluru.

The Ikea store (furniture) is set to be inaugurated at Nagasandra in June and Mr. Brodin invited the Chief Minister for the event.

The India head office of Ikea is in Bengaluru and issues related to extensive use of bamboo and other locally available raw materials in making of furniture came up for discussion during the meeting, according to a release from the Chief Minister's Office.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, along with Ministers Murugesh Nirani and C.N. Ashwath Narayan, during talks with Jester Brodin, CEO of Ingka Group, at the World Economic Forum meet in Davos, Switzerland, on Wednesday.

The company had said that Karnataka was a "priority market" and IKEA India would invest over ₹2,000 crore in the long term and nearly ₹1,000 crore in the Bengaluru store.

"I am pleased to announce that @IKEAIndia will be opening their flagship store in Nagasandra in June 2022. We are also in talks with the organisation to encourage local manufacturing, thus boosting employment and economic growth," Mr. Bommai tweeted later.

Breakfast meeting

Heads of major multinational corporations and prominent non-resident Indian entrepreneurs participated in a breakfast meeting hosted by the Chief Minister in Davos. Founder of Indiaspora in the USA M.R. Rangaswami, chairman of Indorama Corporation in Singapore Prakash Lohia, managing director of Hitachi Japan Bharat Kaul, and chairman of VPS Healthcare in the UAE Shamsheer Valayil were among those he met.

During the day, Mr. Bommai held talks with Axis Bank managing director and CEO Amitabh Chaudhry over upgrading of some of the engineering colleges and universities in the State under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes. The Chief Minister also held talks on investment opportunities in Karnataka, said the release.

Mr. Bommai, who met the head of Nokia, suggested making good use of the opportunities in the State for the manufacture of telecommunication products. Nokia has its biggest research centre in Bengaluru with over 7,000 technocrats engaged in research related to 5G, advanced 5G, and 6G technologies.

The Chief Minister held talks with top honchos of PayPay too.

HC directs govt. to set up permanent medical board for recruiting candidates through KPSC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Taking note of the rejection of an application of a candidate for the post of motor vehicle inspector due to a wrong report given by the medical board set up by the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), the High Court of Karnataka has directed the State government to set up a permanent medical board for examination of candidates for all recruitments done through the KPSC.

"It is high time for the State Government to appoint a permanent medical board to ensure that there must be transparency in the selection process instead of giving a free hand to the KPSC to choose a medical board and experts in all the

recruitments to be conducted by the KPSC," the court said.

The need to set up a permanent medical board by the government was to ensure that a genuine candidate should not be deprived of opportunity and justice needs to be done in all fairness to all the candidates in a transparent manner, the court observed.

Otherwise, the court said, the KPSC officer concerned would refer either Bowring hospital or Minto hospital according to the whims and fancies based on the candidature.

A Division Bench comprising Justice B. Veerappa and Justice S. Rachaiah issued the direction while allowing a petition filed by Shivananje Gowda B.N., an applicant for the post of motor vehicle inspector.

The application of the petitioner was rejected by the KPSC based on the report of the medical board, which was set up by the KPSC in Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital in Bengaluru, which had said that the petitioner has colour blindness to red and green colours and he is half-a-centimetre short of the minimum prescribed height.

The petitioner, who had produced a medical certificate from the same hospital along with his application that had found him fulfilling all the medical requirements, had moved the High Court after the Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal had rejected his plea questioning the correctness of the medical certificate issued by the board set up by the KPSC.

The court, which had referred the petitioner to Minto Hospital, Bengaluru, for an independent medical examination, found from the report that he fulfilled the height requirement as well as had normal vision without any colour blindness.

Following this, the Bench directed the KPSC to consider the application of the petitioner based on the medical report submitted to the court.

KMF registers milestone

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) on Tuesday achieved a milestone in recording 91.07 lakh kg, the highest procurement ever recorded.

The KMF in a release said it aims to procure 100 lakh kg milk on an average per day. Its previous record of 90.62 lakh kg was registered on June 11, 2021. The KMF has thanked all those who have been involved in achieving this record. They include milk cooperative societies, district milk federation, official milk distributors, franchises, staff, and consumers.

BEL plans to expand non-defence business

PSU to invest ₹1,000 crore in R&D

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL) on Wednesday said it was aiming to grow its non-defence businesses.

"Currently, 88% of our business is in the defence sector, and ideally, we should reach a mix of 80:20," said CMD Anandi Ramalingam, while addressing a media conference on Wednesday.

BEL CMD Anandi Ramalingam at a press conference in Bengaluru on Wednesday. • PTI

Other areas

The public sector unit would be expanding in the areas of civil aviation traffic management, healthcare equipment such as dialysis machines and oxygen concentrators, metro doors and rail equipment, and Smart City projects.

BEL posted a 9% growth in turnover to ₹15,044 crore in FY22.

Net profit rose to ₹2,349 crore as against ₹2,065 crore in the previous year. However, the company's exports had drastically dropped to $33.30 million from $51.93 million. The company's order book expanded to ₹57,570 crore from ₹53,434 a year earlier.

Ms. Ramalingam said the company had set a target for ₹20,000 crore worth of orders every year. It also has the mandate to get to a 20% growth range in the coming years. In the current fiscal, it would grow 15%, she added.

In FY22, the company's capital expenditure came to ₹465 crore including for modernisation of plant and machinery and test instruments. In the current year, it has set aside ₹750 crore towards various expansion initiatives, she said.

BEL said it would invest ₹1,000 crore in research and development this year.

Seven set to be declared elected to Council today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The nomination papers of all the seven candidates who filed their papers on Tuesday for the election to seven Legislative Council seats to be elected from the Legislative Assembly have been found to be in order. They will be declared winners unanimously on Thursday.

A statement from Legislative Assembly Secretary M.K. Mahalakshmi said that all nominations had been found to be in order. The candidates would be declared winners on Thursday – the last date for withdrawal of nominations – after 3 p.m.

For the seven seats for which the elections are being held, the BJP has fielded four candidates, the Congress two, and the JD (S) one. The BJP candidates who filed the nomination papers are Laxman Savadi, S. Keshav Prasad, Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, and Hemalatha Nayak , while the Congress candidates are Abdul Jabbar and Nagaraju Yadav, and the JD(S) has fielded T.A. Sharavana.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

50TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

K.V.VENKATASUBBIAH & LALITHAMBAL
1904 - 1972 1914 – 1992
Retd.Dy.Thasildar
Sons, Daughter, Daughters-in-law, Sons-in-law, Grandchildren & Great Grandchildren

DEATH

With profound grief we inform the sudden demise of
Mr Ganesh Varatharajan
on 25th May 2022.
His last rites were performed yesterday in Velachery, Chennai
May his great soul attain Mukthi.
With deep condolences
Family and friends.
98400 12175 / 98842 98514

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

In Revered Memory of
DR. N. SESHAGIRI
10.05.1940 - 26.05.2013
To Live in the Hearts of those you Leave Behind, is not to Die
DR. KASHINATH
on behalf of all
NICEAN"S #
9810282797

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprises)
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited,
No.4 BRLBC Division, Bhadravathi
Ph : 08282-271063 Fax : 08282-271063
E-mail : eeknnlbdvt@yahoo.co.in

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-Procurement Portal only)

No.EE/KNNL/BDN-4/PB-4/4701 Bhadra/Tender Notification No - 04 /2022-23 Dated : 17.05.2022

Percentage Tenders by e-procurement portal in the prescribed form is invited by the undersigned on behalf of Managing Director, KNNL, Bangalore from the eligible Contractor under the Head of Account 4701 Bhadra. The No. of works are 01. The approximate cost of amount put to tender **Rs.99.00 Lakhs.** The amount of **EMD Rs.1.00 Lakhs** (by e-portal) contactors can access and submission of completed e-tendering documents from **24.05.2022 to 01.06.2022 upto 17.30 hours** in the **website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** Technical bid will be opened on **02.06.2022 at 17.31 hours.** After obtaining approval of technical bid from competent authority, the Financial Bid will be opened. Stipulated period for completion of **work 06 Months (Including monsoon).** For more conditions and details visit website **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** OR at undersigned in all working days during office hours on telephone No. **08282 271063**

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
KNNL,No.4 BRLBC Division,
Bhadravathi.

DIPR/SMG/No.125-05 zenkar/2022-23

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, SRI. MOHAN LAL, S/o Sri. Bhura, residing at Rashami Village and Post. Chittaurgarh District, Rajasthan , Presently at Bangalore is the absolute owner of the property described in the Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated and decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, G.P.A, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office **within 7 days from the date of publication hereof,** failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ITEM No. 1 : All that piece and parcel of the undeveloped converted land bearing **Sy. No. 2/1,** measuring to an extent of **2 Acres 36.08 Guntas** (duly converted to Residential purpose vide Official Memorandum bearing No. ALN(A) (A) SR 302/2012-13, dated 07/02/2013, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore), situated at Bidaraguppe Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the :-
East By : Road;
West By : Land bearing Sy. No. 504 & 1
North By : Land bearing Sy. No. 3;
South By : Land bearing Sy. No. 2/2;

ITEM No. 2 : All that piece and parcel of the undeveloped converted land bearing **Sy. No. 3,** measuring to an extent of **1 Acre 36 Guntas** (duly converted to Residential purpose vide Official Memorandum bearing No. ALN(A) (A) SR 302/2012-13, dated 07/02/2013, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore), situated at Bidaraguppe Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District and bounded on the :-
East By : Road;
West By : Land bearing Sy. No. 8;
North By : Land bearing Sy. No. 4, 5 and 6;
South By : Land bearing Sy. No. 2 and 504.

Dated this the 26th day of May 2022 at Bangalore

M/S. LEGAL NEXUS,
ADVOCATES & CONSULTANTS,
No. 428, First Floor, 25th Cross, 24th Main
HSR Layout, Sector 2, Bangalore – 560 102
Phone: 080-65555914
Mobile: 9945688974; 6360160389

'Palestine issue doesn't diminish India-Israel relations'

Ties between the two countries improving in agriculture, defence and cybersecurity: Consul-General Tammy Ben-Haim

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The unresolved Palestine issue could be a factor in India-Israel relationship, but it does not diminish or negate the partnership between the two countries, Tammy Ben-Haim, Israel's Consul-General in Bengaluru, said.

"The Palestine issue is still a factor. But I think it was definitely proven with the Abraham Accords that the Palestinian issue can be an issue, it can be an issue of disagreement, an issue of arguments, but it doesn't diminish, or negate or take away the relationship. So it's still an issue, but I don't know where it is on the list from one to ten," Ms. Ben-Haim said in an interaction with *The Hindu*.

Abraham Accords

Under the Abraham Accords, signed in 2020, Israel signed normalisation agreements with four Arab countries – the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan.

"It took a while for India and Israel to get the relationship going, to recognise both sides and establish full diplomatic relationship," she said, adding that ties were now improving in different fields such as agriculture, defence and cybersecurity.

Regarding the allegations around Pegasus, the spyware manufactured by Israeli company NSO Group, Ms. Ben-Haim said: "It's a private company. It's not even a weapons company. But still they need to have approvals for exports. The government of Israel did set limits on its exports only to governments, for specific use, and specific reasons. So they do have to prove that they comply with the regulations. We are limiting them to selling to governments and governments are using it for specific reasons."

On whether the NSO was required to monitor the end use of the spyware it exports, she said: "I am sure contracts were signed and stipulations were made. The main purpose of Pegasus is to fight terrorism..."

Tammy Ben-Haim, Consul General of Israel, during an interaction in Chennai on Tuesday. • K. PICHUMANI

There were allegations that the weapons-grade spyware was used by governments to carry out surveillance on journalists, activists and even political rivals across several countries, including in India.

Iran nuclear deal

Regarding the Iran nuclear deal, Ms. Ben-Haim said Israel was not opposed to other powers holding talks with Iran.

"The 2015 agreement was too weak. If they are discussing a stronger and longer agreement that would include not just Iran's nuclear programme but also the issue of Iran's rockets and its destabilising presence in the region [it's welcome]. You are dealing with a player that has said it wants to destroy Israel. They are very clear in their regional ambitions and nuclear ambitions. So enter [talks], but enter slowly, correctly and make sure you have a good deal happening."

She added that Iran was "putting money in the hands of Hezbollah and Hamas to instigate them to build bombs and rockets and carry out terror attacks against Israel".

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY

TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 16.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Sikkim, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	32.0	25.6	Kozhikode	0.5	34.4	26.9
Ahmedabad	–	41.5	28.7	Kurnool	–	38.6	27.9
Aizawl	30	25.8	19.6	Lucknow	–	35.7	22.4
Allahabad	–	36.6	23.5	Madurai	9	37.2	24.9
Bengaluru	–	30.1	22.2	Mangaluru	2.6	32.8	25.4
Bhopal	–	39.7	26.5	Mumbai	–	34.5	28.9
Bhubaneswar	–	36.2	24.6	Mysuru	–	33.0	19.2
Chandigarh	6.4	35.8	22.1	New Delhi	–	34.4	23.6
Chennai	–	37.6	29.1	Patna	12	35.0	20.6
Coimbatore	–	35.8	24.4	Port Blair	5	30.6	24.2
Dehradun	3	33.2	17.7	Puducherry	–	36.0	25.6
Gangtok	7.2	19.6	15.3	Pune	–	36.6	24.3
Goa	–	34.0	25.9	Raipur	–	40.2	26.1
Guwahati	–	31.9	26.1	Ranchi	2	33.2	20.1
Hubballi	–	33.0	23.0	Shillong	6	23.6	17.0
Hyderabad	–	38.8	27.8	Shimla	31	21.7	9.8
Imphal	0.4	25.8	21.4	Srinagar	–	27.5	11.6
Jaipur	1	38.0	26.6	Thiruvananthapuram	3	32.7	25.3
Kochi	4	32.2	25.2	Tiruchi	–	39.1	27.0
Kohima	2	24.6	15.0	Vijayawada	2	38.3	24.2
Kolkata	3	36.3	27.8	Visakhapatnam	66	35.0	22.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	14	29	62	137	138	
Bengaluru	7	18	51	92	118	
Chennai	17	10	73	53	64	
Delhi	18	122	71	175	215	
Hyderabad	32	32	16	86	140	
Kolkata	15	17	24	102	107	
Lucknow	6	93	52	121	122	
Mumbai	7	2	25	156	280	
Pune	116	132	114	145	92	
Visakhapatnam	–	–	7	–	–	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Kota, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 228 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 28

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

IN BRIEF

PM to address students in Hyderabad today

HYDERABAD

The Prime Minister will be addressing around 900 students at Indian School of Business in Hyderabad on Thursday. Mr. Modi will plant a sapling, unveil a commemorative plaque and release the ISB MyStamp and Special Cover. He will award medals to the academic scholars of excellence.

Woman found dead in T.N., six detained

RAMESWARAM

The police have detained six persons in a suspected case of gang rape and murder of a woman here. After the woman's body was found, villagers resorted to a six-hour-long road blockade, demanding stern action against the suspects. They hail from Odisha and are working in a private prawn farm in Rameswaram.

Court cancels bail of former MLA in Kerala hate speech case

Police likely to seek custody of P.C. George

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A magistrate court here on Wednesday revoked the bail granted to Kerala Janapaksham (Secular) leader and former legislator P.C. George in a communally provocative hate speech case registered at Fort police station here in early May.

The Judicial First Class Magistrate-II, Thiruvananthapuram, who rescinded the earlier order, said the police were free to arrest Mr. George. A police team is reportedly in Kochi to secure Mr. George's custody. The Kochi police had recorded Mr. George's arrest in a similar case.

The Fort police had booked Mr. George for allegedly inciting hate against a particular minority community at the Anandapuri Hindu Sammelan. The police case was that he had attempted to stoke communal discord by flagging divisive dog-whistle issues.

The police alleged that Mr. George had portrayed inter-faith unions as "love jihad". They also accused the politician of underscoring an "unfounded" fundamentalist conspiracy to increase the numbers of a particular minority community to disempower others.

Earlier in the day, high drama prevailed in Kochi when Mr. George turned up at the Palarivattom police station for interrogation in connection with a case registered against him for allegedly delivering a 'hate speech' at a temple in Vennala earlier this month. The activists of the People's Democratic Party, protesting against the accused politician in front of the station, were arrested and removed from the scene. This was followed by a protest in favour of Mr. George by the BJP activists.

BJP workers protesting against the custody of former legislator P.C. George in Kochi on Wednesday. • R.K. NITHIN

Police yet to identify child in provocative slogan case

ALAPPUZHA

Three days after a video clip emerged of a boy chanting 'provocative' slogans at a Popular Front of India rally held in Alappuzha on May 21, the police are groping in the dark to find clues that will help them identify the child and his parents. PFI Alappuzha district president Navas Vandanam and PFI activist Ansar Najeeb were arrested on Tuesday in connection with the case.

Rich haul for Telangana at WEF in Davos

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

It was a rich haul for Telangana at the World Economic Forum in Davos, as a clutch of global firms announced multi-million investments plans, including drug-maker Ferring Pharma's €60 million for a second manufacturing facility in Hyderabad and Swiss firm Stadler Rail ₹1,0000-crore rail coach factory in partnership with home-grown Medha Servo Drives. The coach manufacturing unit was expected to create employment for over 2,500 people.

Besides the investment commitments that were made following meetings of the senior leadership with Industries and IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao, who is in Davos leading an official delegation, a number of companies evinced interest in exploring growth opportunities in the State.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PRINTING, STATIONERY PUBLICATIONS
R. V. College Post, 8th Mile, Mysore Road, Bengaluru-560059
Notification No. DPS2PUR(B)2022-23/Artpaper Date: 24.05.2022
BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT)
Online Tenders are invited for the **Supply of Art Printing Paper** Under rate contract. Estimated total value of the Tender is about Rs. 110.00 lakhs & total EMD is Rs. 5.50 lakhs. Pre-bid Meeting shall be on Date: **31.05.2022, 11.30 AM** & Last date for Submission of Tender **08.06.2022, 17.30 hrs.** For details please visit Website **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**. For any further clarifications the above office may be contacted.
DIPR/CP/Adv/1649/2022-23 **Sd/- Director**

INSTITUTE OF NANO SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
(An Autonomous Institute of Department of Science and Technology, Govt)
Knowledge City, Sector-81, SAS Nagar, Mohali-140306, Punjab
No. 14(12)/2021-INST Date: 25.05.2022
ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POSITION OF JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOW (JRF) UNDER "DBT" FUNDED PROJECT
Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST) invites applications for engagement of JRF under project entitled "Enhanced osteogenesis promoted by bone injury specific co-delivery of BMP2 and Noggin Si-RNA loaded in microfluidically fabricated amino acid-based nanobowls with pH tunable lids", for a period of one year and may be extended depending upon the performance of the candidate. **Fellowship:** Rs 31,000/- (pm) + 8% HRA. **Last date of receipt of application: 08th June, 2022.** For details, candidate may visit **https://inst.ac.in/careers**

KARNATAKA ROAD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
No.8, "Samparka Soudha", Dr. Rajkumar Road, Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru- 560010. Telefax : 080-22024000, e-mail : mdkrdcl@gmail.com
cekrdcl@gmail.com Website : http: // www.krdcl.in
No. KRDCL/IFB/2022-23/04 Date : 25.05.2022
INVITATION FOR TENDER
Tender has been inveted for Construction of Bridge across Ganesh Falls Halla, Hittalahalli Panchayath in Yallapura Taluk, Uttara Kannada District on Turnkey Basis on Tenderer's Own Design. Interested bidders can participate through e-procurement portal and documents can be downloaded from website: **http//eproc.karnataka.gov.in**. The last date for receipt of tender is on **10.06.2022 upto 17.30 hours** and Technical bids will be opened on **13.06.2022 at 11.30 hours.**
Note: Please note henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through News Papers and futhers if any, will be updated only on e-portal / KRDCL Website : http://www.krdcl.in
DIPR/CP/Sevinfo/662/ 2022-23 **Sd/- Chief Engineer KRDCL, Bengaluru**

BEFORE THE HON'BLE DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II FOR KARNATAKA, Jeevan Mangal Building, No.4, Residency Road, Bangalore
O.A.No.441 of 2021
M/S. STATE BANK OF INDIA, Stressed Asset Recovery Branch, J.C.Road, Bangalore-2. ...Applicant
V/S
1. Mr. H.T. Manohara
2. Mr. Madhichandra P. T. ...Defendants
Summons under Rule 23 (viii) of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993 to Defendant No.2 by way of paper Publication
To. Defendant No.2 : Mr. Madhuchandra, Flat No.701, 2nd Block, Dan Dan Apartment, Ring Road, Hebbal, Mysuru City, Mysuru - 570018.
WHEREAS, the above named applicant has instituted the application U/S 19 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks & Financial Institutions Act, 1993, against the defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.4,28,97,351/-** along with court costs, and current & future interest @ 12.85% p.a. and other reliefs from the date of application till date of recovery. You are hereby required to **show causes within 30 days of the service of the summons on or before 27.6. 2022 at 10:30 am** as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted.
Take Notice that, in case of default of appearance, on the day mentioned here in above, the proceedings will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of this Tribunal on this the **24 day of May 2022** at Bangalore.
Sd/- (Registrar)
Debts Recovery Tribunal - II for Karnataka #4, LIC Jeevan Mangal Building, 1st Floor, Residency (Heyas) Road, Bangalore - 25

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, Ms. V. SHWETHA, D/o. S. Venkatesh, Residing at No. 497, 1st Main, 8th Block, Koramangala, Bangalore – 560095 is the absolute owner of the property described in the Schedule hereunder.
It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated and decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, G.PA, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office **within 15 days from the date of publication hereof,** failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing **BDA Site No. 831, presently comes under BBMP, situated at Sector – I, Hosur Sarjapura Road Layout, Agara, Bangalore,** measuring East to West: 18.60 Mtrs and North to South: 12.19 Mtrs and bounded on the :- **East by:** Site No. 816; **West by:** Road; **North by:** Site No. 830; **South by:** Site No. 832; Along with 45 squares building – Ground, First, Second and Third Floors constructed with Granite flooring and with all civic amenities.
Dated this 26th day of May 2022 at Bangalore
M/S. LEGAL NEXUS,
ADVOCATES & CONSULTANTS,
No. 428, First Floor, 25th Cross, 24th Main HSR Layout, Sector 2, Bangalore – 560 102
Phone: 080-65555914
Mobile: 9945688974; 9164150690

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer, Shivajinagar Division, BBMP Office Building, Queens Road, Bengaluru.
No: EE/SJN/TEND/05/2022-23 **Date: 24-05-2022**
INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)-(SHORT TERM)
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK e-Procurement Portal only)
The Executive Engineer, Shivajinagar Division, on behalf of the Hon'ble Commissioner, BBMP invites short term tender from reputed consultants for preparation of DPR for Shivajinagar Division for the works detailed below .

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Maximum Consultancy Services Charges (in Rs.)	EMD Amount (in Rs.)
1	Detailed Project Report for Construction of Football Stadium, Construction to Convention Hall, Construction to Primary Health Care Centre at Halasuru in Ward No. 90 and Construction to Education and Skill Development Centre (Library, Computer Training) at Shivajinagar in Ward No. 92 **(Package No.01)** Project Cost: **Rs. 1400.00 Lakhs.**	14,00,000.00	35,000.00
2	Detailed Project Report for Construction of Women & Children Welfare Centre at Neharupuram, Construction to Convention Hall and Fitness Centre at HKP Road, Construction to Multipurpose Sports Centre in Ward No. 92,Construction of Women & Children Welfare Centre at Jayamahal in Ward No. 63, Providing GYM Equipment to S.R. Nagar GYM in Ward No. 110 **(Package No.02)** Project Cost: **Rs. 1600.00 Lakhs.**	16,00,000.00	40,000.00
3	Detailed Project Report for Comprehensive Development of Cross Roads, Footpaths at Kodandaram Layout, Cart Street, Thoppe Modaliar Street, Ashoor Khana and Surrounding Area in Ward No. 90 and 91 **(Package No.03)** Project Cost: **Rs. 1000.00 Lakhs.**	10,00,000.00	25,000.00
4	Comprehensive Development of Cross Roads, Footpaths at Shivaji Road Cross Road, Madhavanagara, Broadway Cross Road, New Market, Obedulla Road and Surrounding Area in Ward No. 92 & 93 **(Package No.04)** Project Cost: **Rs. 1000.00 Lakhs.**	10,00,000.00	25,000.00
5	Detailed Project Report for Comprehensive Development of Cross Roads & Footpaths at Jayamahal Gangabhavani Extension, Marappa Garden, Benson Town, Kargappa Garden, Veerapillai Street & SR Nagar Surrounding Areas in Ward No. 63 & 110 and Improvements to Park in Ward No. 63 **(Package No.05)** Project Cost: **Rs. 1000.00 Lakhs.**	10,00,000.00	25,000.00
6	Detailed Project Report for Improvements to Drinking Water System in Ward No. 62, 63, 93, 110, 90, 91 and 92 **(Package No.06)** Project Cost: **Rs. 500.00 Lakhs.**	5,00,000.00	12,500.00

Calendar of Events: 1) Request for Proposal (RFP) Document may be downloaded from the GOK e-Procurement Portal Website: **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in from 26-05-2022. 2)** Last Date for Submission of Completed Documents is **02-06-2022 before 16.00 Hrs. 3)** Technical Bid will be Opened on **03-06-2022 after 12.30 Hrs.** Further details can be had from the above office.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Shivajinagar Division, BBMP.
PAY DEVELOPMENT CHARGES, HELP TO DEVELOP BENGALURU
COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DIVISION, CHITRADURGA
No.EE:PWD:CTA:AE-1:Tender-07:2022-23/590 Dated:- 23.05.2022
SHORTTERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION
Tenders are invited from registered Contractors in KPWD for the following work through e-Procurement Portal as per standard tender documents rules.
Name of work:- Two cover System :- Head of Account 5054-03-337-0-17-154 SH Improvements:- (1) Providing and Fixing Decorative Light and Median at 1) Kumuta Kadamadagi (SH-48) Ch 272.35 to 274.00 Km in Town Limite 2) Chitradurag Turuvanuru Musturu road Ch 0.00 to 3.00 Km in Town Limite 3) Gayatri Circle to NH-4 Service road 4) Anebagilu Fort road to NH-4 Service road for Chitradurga Constituency in Chitradurga Taluk and Town **(WI.152034) Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:- 550.00**
Head of Account 5054-04-337-0-01-154 MDR Improvements:- (2) Improvements and Resurfacing at 1) Jodichikkenahally- Yarehalli road via Ingaladal- Kurumardikere-Kennedalu km 6.50 to 14.00 2) NH-4 to Sibara- Kadleguddu road Via Chikkapura-Kyasapura-Hunasekatte km1.50 to 4.50 km 3) Kavadigaratti to NH-13 Via Echalanagenahalli- Chikkpura gollarahatti-Manangi-Karihatti km 4.50 to 9.60 4) NH-4 to Hulluru road Via Gowrammanahalli- Chikkalagatta Siddavvanahalli- Hunasekatte- Hireguntanuru km 2.00 to 4.50 at Chitradurga Taluk **(W.I. 152035) Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:- 950.00**
Tenders dates are as mentioned below: (1) Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 08-06-2022 Time: 17.30 (2) Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 09-06-2022 Time: 16.00 (3) Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 10-06-2022 Time: 16.01 (4) Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 13-06-2022 Time: 11.00 Further details can be obtained from this office and H.P. Company helpline Numbers 080-25501216 and 080-25501227.
DIPR/CTA/MCA/173/2022-23 Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, Chitradurga.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
ZILLA PANCHAYATH RAICHUR
THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION DIVISION RAICHUR
NO./EE/RDWS&S/RCR/TS/JJM/2022-23/343 DATED : 23-05-2022
SHORT TERM TENDER
The Executive Engineer RDWS & S Division Raichur invites tenders from eligible tenderers Registered under e-procurement civil contractors in Panchayath Engineering Department, for Providing water supply scheme to below works, as per KW-1,2, 3 & 4 Standard Bid Document Under JJM 2021-22 GOI&GOK Fund (85%), GP Contribution (5%), Community Contribution (10%). The tenderers may submit tenders for the works given in the table in GOK e- Procurement platform www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in only as per Rule 28 of the KTPP Act shall be followed.
1) Notification Date : **23-05-2022,** 2) Download of tender schedule documents online : **23-05-2022**, 3) Pre Bid Meeting at Office of the Executive Engineer, RDWS&S, Division, Raichur, 2nd Floor, Zilla Panchyath, Raichur : **31-05-2022 at 11:00,** 3) Last date for receiving of filled tender documents : **02-06-2022 at 5:30 Pm,** 4) Opening of Technical bid: **04-06-2022 at 11:00 Am**, 5) Opening of Financial bid : **06-06-2022 at 11:00 Am**
Indent Nos.: Lingasugur: 40823 (KKRDB), Manvi : 40821 (GESCOM), Sindhanur: 40822, 39027/CALL-3, 39028/CALL-3 & 39029/CALL-3
More details can be had from the Office of the under signed and also through our website www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in by clicking the List of Tenders which will be link all Dept. works list.
DIP/Raichur/99/MC&A/2022-23 **Sd/- Executive Engineer, RDWS&S. Divn, Raichur.**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement mode only)
Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited invites Tenders for the following works
1. No.:SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-3/F-71(9)/2022-23/1810 Date: 24.05.2022
Enquiry No:KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-3/22-23/EPR-14 Dt:23.05.2022 for the work of "Repairs to faulty 20MVA, 66/11kV BBL make power transformer failed at 66/11kV MEI Layout sub-station in TL&SS Division SRS Peenya", pertaining to BMAZ North Circle, Bengaluru.
2. No.:SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)AE/F-76(6)2021-22/1841-42 Date: 24.05.2022
Enquiry No:KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-2/22-23/EPR-2/CALL-2 Dt:08.04.2022 for the work of "Repairs to faulty 20MVA, 66/11kV class, BBL make, Sl. No.4949/10 Power Transformer failed at 66/11kV Kengeri sub-station, BMAZ, North Circle, Bengaluru on total turnkey basis on Percentage tender basis",
3. No.:SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)AEE-2/F-71(3)2022-23/1876 Date: 25.05.2022
Enquiry No:KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-2/21-22/EPR-26/CALL-2 Dt:05.01.2022 for the work of "Arresting Oil Leakage of 2x100MVA Transformer-1 & 2 at 220kV Hebbal R/s in Hebbal Division", pertaining to BMAZ North Circle, Bengaluru.
The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink **"e-Procurement-KPTCL"or directly logging on to website "https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in/"** for **Sl No.1 & 2** on or after **27.05.2022 & Sl No.3** on or after **30.05.2022.**
Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Elecl.)
Transmission (M), BMAZ North Circle, KPTCL, Office Complex, A.R.Circle, Bengaluru-09

Communal clouds

Kerala and its government must mobilise opinion against communalism of all hues

The slogans raised by a child at a rally in Kerala's Alappuzha on May 21 were chilling not merely for the death threats that they make. The fact that an innocent child could be indoctrinated and tutored such that he could call for violence portends a communal storm that is making landfall in the State. Organisers of the rally, the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), disowned the slogans, but not in any reassuring manner. The Islamist group's claim that its rally was to save the Republic does not cut ice, considering its track record and the threatening posturing that it has engaged in, in recent years. It is merely using the democratic space and the prevailing environment of Hindutva upsurge to advance its dangerous, nihilistic communal agenda. At least five people have been killed in Kerala in SDPI-Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) rivalry in the State in recent months. In April, in Palakkad, an SDPI worker and an RSS worker were killed within a span of one day; in December 2021, a State Secretary of the SDPI and a Bharatiya Janata Party OBC Morcha State Secretary were killed in Alappuzha in a similar pattern. This was preceded by the murder of an RSS worked in Palakkad, in November. All these killings were brutal in nature, and added an unmistakable communal hue to violence in Kerala unlike the occasional clashes between the RSS and the CPI(M).

The latest incident is not an isolated one. Muslim angst is being harnessed by extremist organisations that dismiss the Indian Union Muslim League, a constituent of the Congress-led United Democratic Front, as a futile political platform for the community. The BJP and the RSS are pushing hard to expand their presence in the State. A toxic cloud of communalism is enveloping the State, as Hindu, Christian, and Islamic groups, and devious politicians are trying to profit from disharmony. The Opposition Congress and the BJP have condemned the Alappuzha incident and criticised the ruling CPI(M) for its disturbing ambiguity on the issue. The Kerala police have filed an FIR in connection with the provocative slogans, but what is missing is a political message. Both in words and action, the Kerala government and the ruling Left Democratic Front led by the CPI(M) must make it clear that any call or mobilisation for violence is unacceptable in the State. Political expediency must not be a determinant in responses to communalism. Along with strong administrative measures, Kerala must shore up all its inherent strengths through popular mobilisation against communalism of all hues – Hindu, Christian or Muslim. The government must take the lead.

Unending tragedy

The U.S. must impose a ban on assault weapons, expand checks for gun ownership

The U.S. once again faced the grim consequences of its unwillingness to tackle gun violence at its source when a man shot dead at least 19 children and two adults, including a teacher, at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas. The shooting marks the worst such attack in the U.S. since the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School attack in 2018, when a former student of the school in Parkland, Florida, opened fire, killing 17 people and wounding 17 others. A similar major shooting that led to outrage yet saw no permanent reform in guns laws occurred at Sandy Hook elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012, in which 20 first graders and six school employees perished. The Uvalde tragedy has also shaken the nation for it comes scarcely 10 days after a shooting at a supermarket store in Buffalo, New York, which officials described as a racist hate crime, claiming 10 lives. Overall, there have been at least 26 school shootings in 2022 alone and at least 118 incidents since 2018, according to reports that have tracked this statistic over the past four years. Last year witnessed 34 school shootings, the highest number during this period; there were 24 incidents each in 2019 and 2018 and 10 in 2020. Addressing the nation after the Uvalde attack, U.S. President Joe Biden made an urgent plea for common-sense gun control reform, saying, "When in God's name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby?... I am sick and tired of it. We have to act... these kinds of mass shootings rarely happen elsewhere in the world... It's time to turn this pain into action."

Yet, it would be unrealistic to hope for meaningful change in the U.S.'s view on the Second Amendment, which assures citizens of the right to bear arms. Several Presidents, mostly Democrats, have tried and failed to get even basic gun control laws passed through Congress. Former President Barack Obama, for example, came away frustrated after Capitol Hill rejected no fewer than 17 attempts by his White House to bring common-sense gun control to the floor of Congress. While conservative lawmakers seek to score political points by fiercely defending the constitutional right to bear arms, it is common knowledge now that at the heart of the U.S. Congress's refusal to stamp out gun violence in schools and other public spaces is shadowy lobbying on Capitol Hill by the deep-pocketed and well-networked National Rifle Association and, along with them, the entire gun manufacturing industry. If Mr. Biden genuinely wishes to clamp down on this violence, which has ripped into America's soul for several generations now, he may have no choice but to follow in Mr. Obama's steps and use his presidential power of executive actions to enforce gun control measures. These should, at a minimum, include an assault weapons ban, expanded background checks for gun ownership and boosted funding for federal enforcement agencies regulating gun proliferation.

Driving the Balkanisation of India

There is an ascendancy of a political ideology with little understanding of the idea of India as a coalition of the willing

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

One of the reasons for celebrating the completion of 75 years of India is that it has survived as long. At Independence there had been scepticism whether it would. The chief doubter was Winston Churchill, who claimed that India was no more than a geography, the peoples of which the British had helpfully brought under one umbrella through conquest. But as we celebrate India's journey, it would do to recognise that today forces are at work that weaken its unity. In particular, two projects that appear to have the blessing of the present political dispensation at the Centre have the potential to actually destroy it.

The Gyanvapi issue

First, we watch with shock and awe the developments related to the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi. The court has been petitioned to allow Hindus to worship at what has for centuries been a mosque. Impartial observers state that there is incontrovertible evidence that the mosque was once a temple that was demolished at the orders of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Now, we have the Places of Worship Act of 1991 that disallows a change of status of a religious structure. This ought to be sufficient to protect the mosque concerned from the threat of a change in its status as a site of worship for Muslims. But should we see this solely in legal terms? Should, if it comes to that, Indian Muslims of today be asked to vacate a mosque based on an act in the distant past that they are not responsible for? Should India's Hindus not rise to a magnanimity that would reconcile them to the injustice done to their ancestors, heart-rending as it is even to imagine? Not only are they the overwhelming majority of this country now but they also have plenty of places to worship in.

From another democracy

Last year, the United States President, Joe Biden, even if he now enjoys a diminished popularity globally, made an important speech at Tulsa, Oklahoma. U.S., where he had gone to commemorate the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. He had said, "We do ourselves no favors by pretending none of this ever happened or it doesn't impact us today, because it still does impact us today. We can't just choose to learn what we want to know, and not what we should know. We should know the good, the bad, everything. That's what great nations do. They come to terms with their dark sides....." Mr. Biden was suggesting that while Americans must remember, they must also move on without hoarding grievances. This message is valid for both the Hindus and the Muslims of India, depending upon the context.

There is something incomplete in the project of singling out Muslim rule in north India for a record of violence in our history. Though it is yet to be established whether the decline of the great Dravidian settlements of northern India was due to Aryan expansion or environmental causes such as drought, we have reason to believe that this expansion was not without violence. After all, verses in the Rig Veda invoke Indra, the pre-eminent Aryan god, as the slayer of the "dasyu", literally "the enslaved" inhabitants of India. All over northern India, there was till quite recently a pride expressed in the subjugation of the local population by the Aryans upon their arrival. But Hindu nationalism sits uncomfortably with such exultation, for it renders the Aryans foreigners in this land, without the legitimacy to define its cultural norms. The pattern of settlement in India whereby the Adivasi have been corralled into inaccessible spaces such as mountains or banished to the extremities of villages suggest that this was the result of a concerted move to exclude them from social life. This could not have been possible without the threat of violence.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Another project, of language

Speaking of the destruction of religious icons, there is evidence that the Aryans may not have been so ecumenical after all. Archaeologists who participated in the excavation on sites of Harappan civilisation in western India have pointed to the deliberate destruction of remnants of the phallic symbol carved in stone. Admonition of the worship of shishnadeva, literally phallus god, may be found in the sacred literature of Vedic Hinduism. So, the destruction of the religious icons of conquered peoples in India is not confined to Islamic rule in north India. For some Indians, it dates back into our pre-history. This is not to even suggest a moral equivalence, for violence against any defenceless people is cowardly, but it does serve to bring some perspective into the debate about retributive justice related to the injustices of the past. It is the Adivasi amongst us who are least likely to have blood on their hands.

Aligned to the project of isolating the religious minorities of India is Hindu nationalism's second project – that of establishing Hindi as the dominant language in the country. Purely a reflection of the will to dominate, it cannot be rationalised as the pursuit of retributive justice, and, unlike the other project, has unabashed state support. The issue has remained dormant in the country after a very mature settlement of it in the 1960s, whereby it was agreed that English would be used in the communications of the Government of India so long as the southern States want it.

Since 2014, we have seen a renewed thrust being given to Hindi by the Central government. The attempt to impose Hindi on the rest of the country is both insidious and predates the present. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi is being disingenuous when he speaks of the equal importance of all Indian languages while his Home Minister does not miss an opportunity to remind the country of the special status of Hindi. Far too much time and resources of Central government institutions are wasted on promoting Hindi when all its functionaries understand English perfectly well. Nothing but linguistic chauvinism keeps this pursuit alive. Even the so-called socialists of north India are not above it, as revealed by Mulayam Singh, then Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, writing in Hindi, in the 1990s, to his counterpart in Kerala, a politician with a far longer tenure in public life. Sadly, the sentiment that Hindi should prevail is quite widespread in India, as seen in the recent comments of Bollywood actors. These purveyors of mostly costume drama may aspire for Hollywood status but do not have the large-heartedness of a Marlon Brando, who championed the rights of native Americans.

The relentless thrust to impose Hindi came close to succeeding in the mid-1960s, but it took arson and self-immolation in Madras State to fend it off. Today, the moment is less propitious for the Hindi chauvinists. The south is far more advanced than the Hindi heartland in terms of both social and economic progress. In fact, it serves as a beacon of hope for north Indian workers in search of a livelihood. Even the ordinary southerner sees Hindi as the language of the most backward part of the country, one where Muslims are bullied, women are subjugated and politicians are treated as minor feudals. So, why would south Indians agree to be ruled in the language of a region they view as unworthy of emulation? It is not even necessary for them to recall that Hindi is the language of the most recent migrant to this ancient land. They simply reject the majoritarian grounds on which it is deemed to be the national language.

A diverse peoples

Constitutionally, India is a union of States. Its founders crafted an entity that has so far held out under great adversity. But India is also a coalition of peoples that are diverse in terms of their histories and culture. For it to hold together requires leaders with large hearts and not merely big chests. We see today the ascendancy of a political ideology with little understanding of the idea of India as a coalition of the willing. Incapable of winning hearts and minds, it has spawned a divisive politics which has the potential of wrecking a union put together with great care. Only a determinedly active citizenry can avert this outcome.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches at Ashoka University, Sonipat

India must shift the discourse on abortion rights

It is not just a family planning and maternal health issue, but also a sexual health and reproductive rights issue

SONALI VAID & SUMEGHA ASTHANA

As two women public health practitioners who have studied and worked in India and the United States, we voice our solidarity with women in both countries at this precarious moment for abortion rights.

Our public health journeys started with witnessing maternal deaths in India. One of us, on her first clinical rotation, saw a woman die of sepsis, infection in the blood, due to an unsafe backstreet abortion. And the other, during her rural health internship in Uttar Pradesh, witnessed a pregnant woman die on a wooden hand-pulled cart because she was unable to reach the hospital in time. The images of these two women with their swollen abdomen and pale, dying faces still haunt us, as we reflect on the privileges we enjoy as women belonging to a certain class and caste in India.

The facts

Women, pregnant people and transgender persons in India struggle every day to exert their choice about birthing and their bodily autonomy. Yet, despite this bleak reality, netizens on social media in India claim that the country is more progressive than the U.S. on abortion rights because we have the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 ("MTP Act"). Such a self-congratulatory attitude is neither in good faith nor is it factually correct.

According to the World Health Organization, six out of 10 of all unintended pregnancies end in an induced abortion. Around 45% of all abortions are unsafe, almost all of which (97%) take place in developing countries. As per a nationally representative study published in *PLOS One* journal in 2014, abortions account for 10% of maternal deaths in India.

The recent round of the National Family Health Survey 2019-2021, shows that 3% of all pregnancies in India result in abortion. More than half (53%) of abortions in India are performed in the private sector, whereas only 20% are performed in the public sector – partly because public facilities often lack abortion services. More than a quarter of abortions (27%) are performed by the woman herself at home.

In another a fact-finding study published in *The Lancet* in 2018, 73% of all abortions in India in 2015 were medication abortions, and even though these may have been safe – many of these are illegal as per the MTP Act, if they occur without the approval of a registered medical practitioner. Another 5% of all abortions were outside of health facilities with methods other than medication abortion. These risky abortions are performed by untrained people under unhygienic conditions using damaging methods such as insertion of objects, ingestion of various substances, abdominal pressure, etc. A recent study found that sex-selective abortions in India could lead to 6.8 million fewer girls being born between 2017 to 2030.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Many may be unaware of these disturbing statistics and facts. But we all know of at least one adolescent girl among our family or friends or networks who had to travel to another city in order to find a 'non-judgmental' obstetrician or who had to arrange money to access abortion in the private sector. Or, we may have heard of someone who has aborted a female foetus because the family wanted a son; or know of a mother who escaped the pressure of such forced abortion because she did not want to lose her pregnancy.

Obstacles

The MTP Act, first enacted in 1971 and then amended in 2021, certainly makes 'medical termination of pregnancy' legal in India under specific conditions. However, this Act is framed from a legal standpoint to primarily protect medical practitioners because under the Indian Penal Code, "induced miscarriage" is a criminal offence. This premise points to a lack of choice and bodily autonomy of women and rests the decision of abortion solely on the doctor's opinion. The MTP Act also only mentions 'pregnant woman', thus failing to recognise that transgender persons and others who do not identify as women can become pregnant.

Moreover, the acceptance of abortion in Indian society is situated in the context of population control and family planning. But, most importantly, after more than 50 years of the MTP Act, women and transgender persons face major obstacles in accessing safe abortion care.

These are seven examples: First, they may not even be aware that abortion is legal or know where to obtain one safely; second, since the MTP Act does not recognise abortion as a choice, they need the approval of medical professionals even in the first few weeks of the pregnancy; third, unmarried and transgender people continue to face stigma and can be turned away from health facilities, forcing them to resort to unsafe care; fourth, mandatory reporting requirements under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill (POCSO), 2011 law against child sexual offences, impact privacy and hinder access of adolescents to safe abortion services; fifth, many are still coerced into agreeing to a permanent or long-term contraceptive method as a prerequisite for getting abortion services; sixth, health-care providers may impose their own morality by insisting on 'husbands' or 'parental' consent for abortion. Even women seeking abortion care in health facilities are often mistreated and not provided medications for pain relief; seventh, despite laws prohibiting sex determination, the illegal practice persists. The mushrooming of unregulated ultrasound clinics in India continues to facilitate the illegal practice of sex determination, resulting in unsafe abortions and female foeticide.

It is a testament to class and caste divides when netizens talk of being 'progressive' when, 50 years after the MTP Act, women continue to die due to unsafe abortions. Passing one law and assuming the job is done is far from "progressive" when so many face a lack of access, systemic barriers, social norms and cultural preferences, and even criminal liability.

One law is insufficient

There is an urgent need in our country to shift the discourse on abortions from just being a family planning and maternal health issue to one of a sexual health and reproductive rights issue. The situation in India shows that one law alone is insufficient and we must raise the bar on reproductive justice. We must improve our health systems to ensure good quality and respectful abortion care. As the focus on abortion rights in the U.S. rages, we call upon all to self reflect and to stand in solidarity with people in the U.S. and other places where reproductive rights are in jeopardy. Reproductive injustice anywhere is a threat to the lives of people everywhere.

Dr. Sonali Vaid is an Aspen New Voices Fellow and the founder of Inclave Labs, an organisation committed to improving health-care quality and safety.
Dr. Sumegha Asthana is a postdoctoral researcher at Georgetown University and is the co-founder of the India chapter of Women in Global Health

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

To read more letters online, scan the QR code

IPEF member

India's joining a new formation, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), merits a cautious welcome (Editorial, May 25). While the IPEF holds out the hope of prosperity to a country like India, it does have its set of needs, issues and challenges. In various trade negotiations, including WTO, or proposals with regional multilateral arrangements of the past, India did experience significant gaps between promises made at inception and the hard negotiating positions at the table. One has to wait and watch what the future holds in the areas of expected modifications, in labour laws, policy adjustments and exports of essential commodities. Finally, India should not forego its ability to navigate around the vortex of conflicts between two competing global economic powers,

A. VENKATA GIRIJA KUMAR,
Chennai

State of the Congress

Hardik Patel's exit from the Congress is another blow against the party leadership profile, especially Rahul Gandhi. Mr. Patel's reasons for his exit seem very similar to what Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma highlighted when he moved from the Congress to the BJP. The Congress needs to introspect over the way it functions on a daily basis and not only in Chintan Shivirs. A key issue to debate is whether Mr. Gandhi fits the leadership bill any more.

K. RAMACHANDRAN,
Chennai

■ People are hesitant to accept the 'Prince' of the Congress as a sincere and serious politician; there has been absolutely no field work of his that is worth mentioning. He has also not explained in a credible way how a resurgence of the Congress will help India become more prosperous and stronger. The party needs full-time and dedicated workers to try and revive its dwindling fortunes.

V. RAHUL VENKATASUBRAMANIAN,
Chennai

Monkeypox vigil

The occurrence of monkeypox in many parts of the world and the concern raised by the World Health Organization should be kept in view. Since we phased out smallpox vaccination after the disease was completely eradicated from the country in April 1977 and from earth in December 1979, the present unvaccinated population remains highly vulnerable as the smallpox virus and monkeypox virus are cross protective. The role played by King Institute Guindy (in Chennai) in the production of smallpox vaccine in the earlier days is commendable.

Dr. V. PURUSHOTHAMAN,
Chennai

The money spider

It was interesting to read the report, "Money spider, ant-mimicking species spotted in Wayanad" (May 25), as being a first in India. As soon as I saw the pictures, I remember having spotted the species in my garden in Karwar, Karnataka, nesting on my orchids. My home is at the foothills of the Sahyadri Hills in the Western Ghats. I am fascinated by spiders and it was while searching for them and their reflective eyes to photograph that I found the ant-looking insect. Perhaps the Kerala researchers might want to check this.

SHIVANI RANE,
Karwar, Uttarakannada, Karnataka

Be wary of growing exports

The growing consumption in rich countries has come at a cost for developing countries such as India

POORNIMA VARMA

Farmers plant saplings in a rice field on the outskirts of Ahmedabad • REUTERS

The uncertainties in the global economic environment, significantly driven by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the resultant sanctions on Russia by the West, along with Sri Lanka's ongoing struggles to stay afloat amidst a deepening crisis, have all been believed to have created export opportunities for countries such as India. However, this well-celebrated export spike needs to be viewed with a pinch of salt.

Emissions-embodied exports

The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen witnessed a vociferous argument from countries such as India and China that developed countries who are consuming polluted goods produced elsewhere also have an obligation to clean up the mess. The data available from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) indicates that India is one of the leading exporters of carbon emissions-embodied products, and that there is a steady increase in the total carbon emissions embodied in exports. China is the largest exporter of carbon emissions-embodied products, followed by the U.S., Russia and India. India's total carbon emission exports increased from 80.3 million tonnes at the time of it joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 to 426.1 million tonnes in 2018. The sharp increase in carbon-embodied exports brought India closer to that of the U.S.'s carbon emission exports. In the case of the U.S., carbon emission exports were more or less stagnant between 1995 and 2018.

Net CO2 exports can be calculated by taking the difference between carbon emissions-embodied exports and carbon emissions-embodied imports. The striking difference between China and India is that while China's net exports began to decline from 2007-08, net exports in India started to steadily increase in that period. While India's net exports of carbon emissions were observed to be the lowest in 2007 (-11.6 million tonnes), at present the net exports are 55.4 million tonnes. Another way of calculating the net export of carbon emissions is by taking the difference between domestic carbon emissions embodied in gross exports and foreign carbon emissions embodied in gross exports. By using this definition also, there is a steady increase in net exports of carbon emissions from India. In 1995, net exports were 75.8 million tonnes; it increased to 372 million tonnes in 2018.

India's recent export performance has been attributed to petroleum products, electronics and chemicals. Although net carbon emission exports have been declining in the case of chemicals and electronics as imports have been rising at a greater rate, the carbon emissions-embodied exports of all these products have been steadily increasing over the years. For example, the domestic carbon emissions-embodied exports of chemicals was only 2.1 million tonnes in 1995, which increased to around 9.8 million tonnes in 2018. Similarly, carbon emissions exports of electronics increased from 1.3 million tonnes to 8 million tonnes, and exports of petroleum carbon increased from 6.6 to 25.5 million tonnes during this period. The net exports of carbon emissions have also been increasing in the case of petroleum products.

Most developed countries are the net importers of polluted goods produced elsewhere, especially in the developing countries. The largest net importers of carbon emission-intensive goods are the U.S., Japan and Germany. The U.S. net carbon imports increased from 262.3 million tonnes in 1995 to 834.1 million tonnes in 2018. The OECD member countries which are developed are net importers. Due to the stringent environmental measures adopted by developed countries, pollution-intensive industries show a tendency to relocate from developed countries to developing countries with the lowest environmental standards/weak enforcement of environmental standards in order to cut resource and labour costs – a phenomenon researchers term as 'pollution haven hypothesis'. Thus, developing countries that are lax in enforcing environmental policies eventually become pollution havens.

One could possibly argue that an increased GDP as a result of expansion in export revenue can be utilised for improving the environmental quality. As per the environmental Kuznets curve, there is an inverted U-shape relationship between the income of a country and its environmental degradation. This implies that as income increases, environmental quality begins to deteriorate, but improves after some time. However, there is no consensus across studies with respect to this possibility.

Coming to the exports of agricultural and food products, India is virtually exporting some of its depleting natural resources such as water through exports. India is the leading exporter of rice in the world market. Given that rice is a water-intensive crop, India is indirectly exporting water to other countries. This virtual water trade will have an adverse impact on long-term sustainability and food security of the country although there has been an overall improvement in water-use efficiency. (As per the water use efficiency index developed as part of the sustainable development goals, water efficiency has risen from 0.95 ($/m3) during the period 1993-97 to 3 ($/m3) during the period 2018-22.) The agricultural water withdrawal as a percentage of total available renewable water resources has increased from 26.7% in 1993 to 36% in 2022. The total per capita renewable water resources have also declined from 1909 cubic metres to 1412 cubic metres during this period.

The way forward

The growing consumption in rich countries has come at a cost for developing countries such as India. Countries have begun imposing an environmental tax to address a broad spectrum of environmental issues. For example, in OECD countries, the tax roughly constitutes 2% of the GDP. While the environmental tax in India is around 1%, the tax as a percentage of GDP has marginally come down from 1.38% in 2005 to 1.07% in 2019. In order to ensure long-term sustainability, strict environmental measures need to be explored, such as revisiting the possibilities of increasing the environmental tax, even though the short-run implications, especially on the trade front, may not be pleasant. Similarly, water-saving policies that seek to improve the water use efficiency are also the need of the hour, in order to promote sustainable production of rice and also safeguard food security in the country.

Poornima Varma is faculty and chairperson at the Centre for Management in Agriculture, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad. The views expressed are personal

Diversifying plates for girls

Promoting dietary diversity is crucial during adolescence, especially among girls, who face more physiological demands

AMEET BABRE
& SMITHA CHEKANATH PARAMBATH

Multiple studies show that adolescence is a nutritionally demanding phase of life. Even though both adolescent boys and girls face emotional changes during puberty, girls face more physiological demands and thus require a higher intake of macro and micro nutrients. Susceptibility of adolescent girls to anaemia is 40% compared to boys at 18%. This is why promoting dietary diversity is crucial during adolescence, as dietary habits are in the formative stage and evidence shows that behaviour imbibed during adolescence has a higher chance of being continued in adult life. Ensuring appropriate nutrition for adolescent girls is also paramount considering the inter-generational impact it has on combating malnutrition.

Focus on girls

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5 data (2019-20) show an increase in anaemia among adolescent girls by 5% when compared to NFHS-4. The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey 2019 shows that even before the pandemic, consumption of diverse food groups among adolescents was low. The fallout of COVID-19 has further worsened dietary diversity, especially of women, adolescents and children. A study by the Tata-Cornell Institute for Agriculture and Nutrition showed that women's dietary diversity in India declined by 42% during COVID-19 lockdowns as they consumed fewer fruits, vegetables, and eggs. The lockdowns also led to the loss of mid-day meals and interruptions in Weekly Iron Folic Acid Supplementation (WIFS) and nutrition education in schools for adolescent girls. This was compounded by challenges in providing nutrition services to out-of-school adolescent girls which further increased their vulnerability to poor nutrition outcomes. Adolescence is the window of opportunity where practices of dietary diversity can be built to correct nutritional deficiencies and replenish the body with much-needed nutrients, especially for girls. There are a few recommendations that emerge on strengthening the diets of adolescent girls in India.

First, along with continued service delivery of WIFS, the government's health and nutrition policies need to emphasise on strong compliance to diverse diets and physical activities. This includes locally sourced fruits and vegetables, seasonal diets, and the inclusion of millets. This further needs to be supplemented by strengthened nutrition counselling for adolescent girls through community workers' home visits, by building a strong ecosystem in schools to promote healthy habits and diets, virtual counselling, and comprehensive nutrition counselling through community-based events and Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Days.

We need to promote good nutrition among adolescents through Nutri-Smart schools (building kitchen gardens in schools), which are already being implemented in some States. Such initiatives will increase awareness, improve availability, and accessibility to diverse foods groups.

Second, as service delivery platforms to tap adolescents, we need to also think beyond schools, as the diverse plates are first set at home. Young girls need to be equipped with accurate information about adequate and appropriate diets so that they can act as change agents for their families, community, and peer groups. Further, food diversification is required to be complemented with reformative steps such as the recent amendment of increasing the legal age of marriage for women from 18 years to 21 years. However, for such legislation to have the best impact, it is equally crucial to ensure that girls remain in school or formal education, their safety is ensured, and their health and nutrition are prioritised. Only then can such measures provide opportunities for girls to improve their nutritional and health outcomes.

Micro nutrient deficiencies

Third, the adolescent's nutritional status is related to the burden of multiple micro nutrient deficiencies. Currently, 80% of adolescents suffer 'hidden hunger' due to micro nutrient deficiencies. The trend is more prevalent in girls as they already suffer multiple nutritional deprivations. We need to strengthen our policy initiatives to address deficiencies of not just iron and folic acid, but also vitamin B12, vitamin D, and zinc.

Lastly, the POSHAN Abhiyaan (now Mission POSHAN 2.0) strongly integrates the aspect of under-nutrition and anaemia among women, girls, and children. However, the design needs to be inclusive of the growing risk of non-communicable diseases and obesity among adolescents. Given that over 10% of adolescents are overweight in 12 States of India, strict action plans need to be devised against the sale and advertisement of unhealthy foods and beverages.

Ameet Babre is National Program Manager-Health Systems for India; Smitha Chekanath Parambath is the State Representative, Gujarat, at the Nutrition International

STATE OF PLAY

All eyes on Thrikkakara

Leading fronts have put all their stakes on the bypoll

S. ANANDAN

The bypoll to the Thrikkakara Assembly constituency in Ernakulam district on May 31 is inconsequential in terms of its impact on the numerical strength of the ruling CPI(M)-led LDF or the Congress-led UDF in the Kerala Assembly. The LDF is just a seat short of 100 against the UDF's 41 legislators in the 140-member assembly. But the all-out campaign by both of them in Thrikkakara points to what is at stake.

Having won a re-election a year ago, the LDF government led by Pinarayi Vijayan views the byelection as an appraisal of its large-scale infrastructure push, especially the SilverLine semi-high speed rail network, which has faced resistance from environmentalists, technocrats, the Opposition and the people likely to be displaced by the standalone rail corridor. In line with the new development paradigm for Kerala unveiled by Mr. Vijayan at his party's State conference two months ago, the government has made no bones about its intent to undertake 'growth-oriented' high-value development projects alongside the welfare initiatives for which it won applause in the first term.

But Thrikkakara has a record of only electing Congress representatives since the formation of the constituency in 2011. The party has fielded Uma, the wife of its popular late legislator from the constituency P.T. Thomas, to retain the seat. Wresting it would, therefore, bolster the government's push for reforms. It is unsurprising that the LDF campaign is being spearheaded by Mr. Vijayan and the alliance's ministers and legislators are going door to door seeking votes. The LDF candidate is Jo Joseph, a medical doctor, who has been fielded with an eye on the constituency's 'apolitical' votes. That the corporate-backed Twenty20 Party, which garnered over 13,000 votes in Thrikkakara in the 2021 Assembly elections, has chosen to abstain from contesting, has kindled their hopes.

For the Congress, at its nadir electorally, it's a do-or-die battle. It is pinning its hopes on the political clout of its late legislator but isn't leaving anything to chance. The government's recent decision to choose the geo-tagging route instead of the physical stone-laying one to mark the alignment of the controversial rail project has been deemed by the Opposition as an initial victory of its campaign. The Congress is trying to capitalise on this. But the party is facing troubles in terms of infighting and the exodus of senior leaders in Ernakulam to the Left camp. Interestingly, it is also hoping to benefit from the absence of Twenty20 in the fray.

The Kitex company, which sponsors Twenty20, has been at loggerheads with both the CPI(M) and the Congress over allegations of the company's garment unit polluting a nearby river. The party, which enjoys power in a few panchayats and wields some clout in the region, has now entered into an alliance with the Aam Admi Party, which is trying to reinvent itself in Kerala. It has decided not to favour any side but the fact is that the conglomerate doesn't have a captive vote base in the constituency. But given the criticality of the 'apolitical' votes they can sway, both leading fronts are going soft on the new entity.

This apart, the Catholic church is at the centre of electioneering with the UDF accusing the Left candidate of being a nominee of a Church leader and the Left making statements against 'needlessly dragging' religious institutions for politicking. The late Congress legislator was persona non grata for the church, but the church has now taken an equidistant stance officially. Also trying to woo the Christian voters is the BJP-led NDA, pandering to some church leaders' unyielding Islamophobic positions.

The leading fronts have put all their stakes on the bypoll, hoping to reap political dividends from it. It is only natural that Thrikkakara permeates all discussions in Kerala now.

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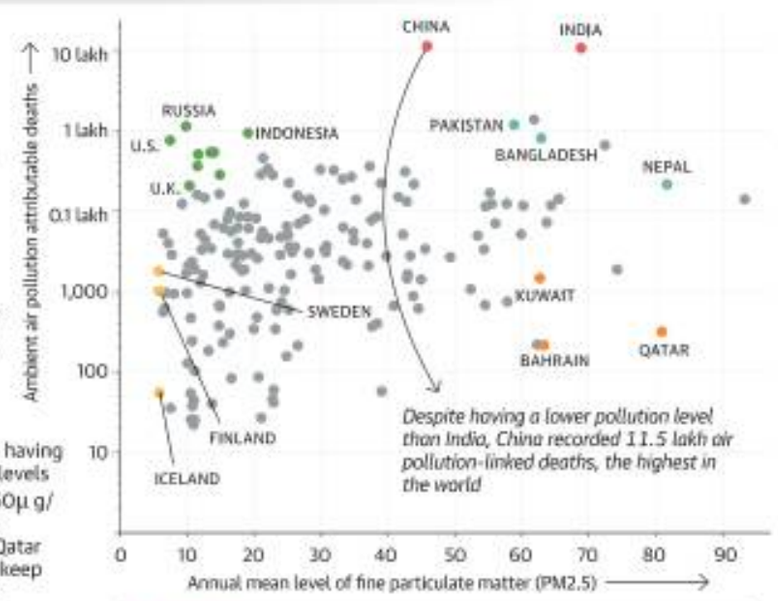
DATA POINT

Pollution and its impact on life

A week ago, the National Human Rights Commission issued an advisory to the Central and State governments about minimising pollution as India is facing ecological degradation which hinders basic human rights. According to the WHO, the annual mean level of fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) in India was almost 70µ g/m3 in 2016*. India's figures were about 14 times higher than the guideline value prescribed by the WHO – 5µ g/m3. In fact, no country had an yearly average below this mark in 2016. While higher pollutant levels are associated with life-threatening diseases such as lower respiratory infections, lung cancers and heart diseases, they are also linked to infant deaths. In 2019, over 1 lakh infants died in their first month of life in India, from health effects associated with air pollution exposure, according to the State of Global Air report. Overall, over 10 lakh deaths in India were attributed to ambient air pollution in 2016

POLLUTION KILLS

The chart plots the **annual mean level of PM 2.5 against the deaths attributed to ambient air pollution in 2016** across countries. Chronic exposure to PM 2.5 contributes to the risk of developing cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. Burden of disease is calculated by combining information on the relative risk of a disease resulting from pollution exposure and information on how widespread the exposure is in the population. This allows calculation of the 'population attributable fraction', which is the fraction of disease seen in a given population that can be attributed to the exposure



Despite having a lower pollution level than India, China recorded 11.5 lakh air pollution-linked deaths, the highest in the world

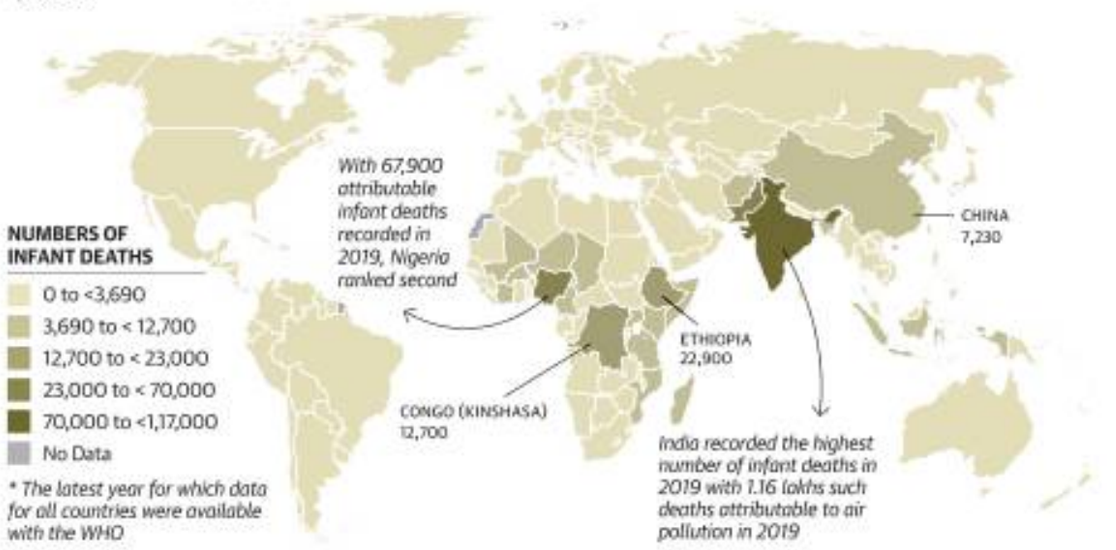
1 With over 10.8 lakh deaths, India had the second-largest number of deaths attributable to ambient air pollution in 2016

2 Despite having PM 2.5 levels above 60µ g/m3, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar managed to keep attributable deaths low

3 Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh had more than 55µ g/m3 PM 2.5 levels and over 20,000 deaths attributed to air pollution

4 Sweden, Finland and Iceland were the only countries to have annual PM 2.5 levels closest to the WHO guideline values

INFANT DEATHS | The map shows the number of infant deaths attributable to air pollution in 2019. Low birth weight and pre-term births are more susceptible to lower respiratory infections, brain damage and jaundice, the leading factors for death in the first month of life. Similar to tobacco smoking, which increases the risk of low birth weight and pre-term births, air pollution also affects developing fetuses.
The proportion of neonatal deaths linked to air pollution was estimated by looking at the direct effects of air pollution on lower respiratory infections in babies 0-27 days old


NUMBERS OF INFANT DEATHS
0 to <3,690
3,690 to < 12,700
12,700 to < 23,000
23,000 to < 70,000
70,000 to <1,17,000
No Data
With 67,900 attributable infant deaths recorded in 2019, Nigeria ranked second
CONGO (KINSHASA) 12,700
ETHIOPIA 22,900
CHINA 7,230
India recorded the highest number of infant deaths in 2019 with 1.16 lakhs such deaths attributable to air pollution in 2019

* *The latest year for which data for all countries were available with the WHO*

SOURCE: WHO, STATE OF GLOBAL AIR

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 26, 1972

Rectify mistakes in maps: India

New Delhi, May 25: The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, to-day told the Lok Sabha that the Government would continue to press the Soviet Union to implement its "oral assurance to us" on the wrong depiction of Indian borders in the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia. However, he could not say how long the Soviet Union would take to rectify the mistake. He was replying to Mr. B.K. Das Chowdhury, Mr. H.M. Patel, and Mr. Pranaga Deb, who had called the Government's attention to Soviet maps depicting large portion of Indian territory in NEFA and Aksai Chin as part of China. Both Dr. Das Chowdhury and Mr. H.M. Patel who copiously quoted from past debates on the subject doubted the Soviet intention in giving the assurance but not correcting the map. They spoke of possibilities of misrepresentation some years hence because of extensive circulation of the wrong maps in western countries as a result of a deal between an American firm and the Soviet Government for publication of the English edition of the encyclopaedia. Earlier, Mr. Swaran Singh said, "The Soviet authorities had assured us that this was a matter dealt with in a technical manner by their cartographers and specialists and did not have any political significance."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 26, 1922

The failure in India

Look where you will in the Europe of today and everywhere you discern the dark spectre of Fear. In England they fear the common people and what the other Powers may do; in Ireland, it is or was sought to repress a nationality by force; in France they fear or profess to fear Germany, whom prostrate on the ground, they hope to kick to death; in Germany they fear the ruin and chaos inflicted on them by the victors; in Russia the hatred of the capitalist Powers; in all the old dominions of Austria and Turkey are men who fear and fight each other. Nowhere is there trust, nowhere goodwill. Outside this blood stained Europe we find in more than one country the gloom or the same evil presence. Thus in India the usurping white race fears the people of the land, whilst China fears the greed of the powers Japan and Great Britain and France and America. Even these credulous folk who still have faith in the politicians who by their crimes and blunders brought about the war, a war which has cost the lives of ten million men and has wasted 50000 millions sterling, even they must begin to suspect that there is something radically wrong in the world.

FROM PAGE ONE

Yasin Malik gets life term for terror funding

Having considered all the arguments, the court observed: "The crimes for which convict has been convicted are of very serious nature. These crimes were intended to strike at the heart of the idea of India and intended to forcefully secede J&K from Union of India. The crime becomes more serious as it was committed with the assistance of foreign powers and designated terrorists. The seriousness of crime is further increased by the fact that it was committed behind the smoke screen of an alleged peaceful political movement."

The court said: "The claim of the convict is that he gave up the gun in 1994 and thereafter, he was recognised as a legitimate political player which is evident by the fact that the Government of India has been engaging with him and had been providing him the platforms to express his opinions. On the face of it, it seems to be a very sound argument which would give an impression that convict has already reformed. However, in my opinion, there was no reformation of this convict."

Malik had never expressed any regret for the violence he committed prior to 1994, the court noted, stating that when he claimed to have given up the gun, the Indian government took it at face value and gave him an opportunity to reform and in good faith, tried to engage in a meaningful dialogue with him.

Violence in disguise

"However, as discussed in the order on charge, the convict did not desist from violence. Rather, betraying the good intentions of government, he took a different path to orchestrate violence in the guise of political struggle. The convict has claimed that he had followed Gandhian principle of non-violence and was spearheading a peaceful non-violent struggle. However, the evidence on the basis of which charges were framed and to which convict has pleaded guilty, speaks otherwise."

"The entire movement was planned to be a violent movement and large-scale violence ensued is a matter of fact. I must observe here that the convict cannot invoke the Mahatma and claim to be his follower because in Mahatma Gandhi's principles, there was no place for violence, however high the objective might be," the court said.

Gyanvapi, Mathura case hearings today

New civil suit seeking right to worship on Varanasi mosque premises transferred to fast-track court

ABHINAY LAKSHMAN
MATHURA

A Mathura court on Wednesday heard another application filed in connection with the Shri Krishna Janmbhoomi-Shahi Idgah Mosque dispute. The application sought permission that the suit filed by the plaintiffs be heard in a representative capacity.

The application was filed by advocate Shailendra Singh, the latest plaintiff to file a suit over the issue. Mr. Singh said he had filed it under Section 92 read with Section 91 and 151 of the Code of Civil Procedure so that the suit can be considered as representative of the prayers of the larger Hindu community.

While hearing the matter, Additional District Judge Sanjay Chaudhary asked Mr. Singh how his application would override the principle of *res judicata* (which allows for similar suits to be consolidated), given that the Allahabad High Court had already directed a lower court to decide on consolidating all suits within four months.

A view of the Shri Krishna Janmasthan Temple and the Shahi Idgah Mosque in Mathura. • PTI

Mr. Singh then sought more time to address these queries, following which the judge posted the matter for hearing on May 31.

Meanwhile, the civil judge (senior division) in Mathura is all set to begin hearing the first suit filed in the matter by advocate Ranjana Agnihotri. This suit was earlier dismissed by a civil court. After this, the plaintiffs approached the district court, which remanded the matter back to the trial court.

Tanveer Ahmed, secretary of the Shahi Idgah Masjid management committee and lawyer for the mosque, said the first hearing in Mr. Agnihotri's suit would be held on Thursday. He added that another suit, filed by advocate Mahendra Pratap, was already at the stage of arguments and the next date of hearing in this was set for July 1.

Mr. Ahmed said the mosque had so far received notice in a total of six suits – nearly identical to each other.

Gyanvapi dispute

A Varanasi district court is set to begin hearing the Gyanvapi Mosque-Kashi Vishwanath Temple dispute case on Thursday as well, where Mr. Agnihotri is expected to argue as part of the plaintiff Hari Shankar Jain's team.

In the Gyanvapi dispute, District and Sessions Judge A.K. Vishvesha will start hearing the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee's plea challenging the maintainability of the suit filed by the Hindu parties. The court has also directed all parties concerned to file objections to the report submitted by the commission that surveyed the mosque premises.

While the report is yet to be made public, videos alleged to be part of the survey were leaked based on which the Hindu parties claimed that a *Shivling* was discovered and the Muslim side claimed that the structure was part of the fountain at the mosque's *wuzu khana*.

Based on the Hindu parties' claims, another civil suit has been filed seeking the right to worship on the mosque premises.

Significantly, on Wednesday, the civil judge in Varanasi transferred this suit to the fast-track civil court of Mahendra Pandey, who is now set to hear the matter on May 30.

J&K HC grants bail to PDP leader Parra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday granted bail to Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) youth president Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra. Arrested in 2020, he faces charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

"Keeping in view the totality of the circumstances and the discussion, we are of the considered view that this [bail] appeal deserves to be allowed. The superintendent, Central Jail, is directed to release the appellant, provided he is not involved in any other case," a Division Bench, comprising Justices Vinod Chatterji Koul and Sanjeev Kumar, said.

Justices Koul and Kumar directed Mr. Parra to make himself available before the Investigating Officer as and when required.

3 Pak. militants, policeman killed

22 Pakistani militants killed this year, says Kashmir Inspector-General of Police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Three non-local Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militants and a policeman were killed in an encounter in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Wednesday.

"We've killed three Pakistani militants of the JeM during a chance encounter, while several checkpoints were set up in the area. One policeman also got killed," Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said.

He said the deceased militants had been active in the area for three-four months. "We were tracking them. Till now, this year, we have killed 22 Pakistani militants," the IGP said.

Untimely farewell: A relative of the deceased policeman Mudasir Ahmad, who was killed in an encounter in Baramulla, paying respects to his mortal remains on Wednesday. • PTI

'Incident' averted

The deceased policeman was identified as Special Police Officer (SPO) Mudasir Ahmad.

"He was a very brave jawan. The terrorists were planning to do some big incident in Srinagar. We've averted a major incident by neutralising them," Mr. Kumar said.

Director-General of Police Dilbag Singh felicitated Mr. Ahmad a few days ago for "the good work by him and his team in busting terror module involved in a recent grenade attack on a wine shop in Baramulla", which left an employee dead. The police identified the killed militants as Haneef, Ali Bhai and Shah Wali, all residents of Pakistan.

According to an Army spokesperson, the trio was travelling in a car towards Mirgund from Puthkah. "A joint operation was launched. The team was fired upon by the terrorists and a gunfight ensued," the Army said.

A soldier was injured in a mine blast near the Mankote sector along the Line of Control in Poonch district on Wednesday. The injured soldier was identified as Naik Ajay Kumar, who sustained multiple injuries on both legs in the blast.

Woman shot dead in Budgam militant attack

Amreen was popular on social media

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

In the sixth targeted attack by militants in Kashmir in May, a woman, who was popular on social media for her reels on Instagram, was shot dead and her nephew injured in Budgam on Wednesday.

The police said terrorists fired upon Amreen Bhat, daughter of Khazir Mohammad Bhat, a resident of Hushroo at Chadoora in Budgam, at her home.

"She was shifted to hospital where doctors declared her dead. Her 10-year-old nephew, who was also at home, sustained bullet injury in the arm," the police said.

Amreen Bhat

Rise in targeted killings

According to the police, three terrorists of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) were involved "in this heinous terror incident".

"The area was cordoned off and a search started after the attack," the police said.

Kashmir has seen a rise in targeted killings this month. Three policemen and two civilians were among those killed in militant attacks in May. Parties in Jammu and Kashmir have condemned the killing.

"Shocked and deeply saddened by the murderous militant attack on Bhat. There can be no justification for attacking innocent women and children," National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah said.

Sajad Lone's Peoples Conference also strongly condemned the killing "as a dastardly act of senseless violence".

Gunman kills 19 children, 2 teachers at U.S. school

Investigators believe Ramos posted photos on Instagram of two guns he used in the shooting.

Before the attack, Ramos shot and wounded his grandmother, then fled the scene, crashing his car at the school and making his way inside, authorities said.

Mr. Olivarez said the gunman "just began shooting numerous children and teachers that were in that classroom, having no regard for human life... Just began shooting anyone that was in his way".

He said a tactical team forced its way into the classroom, and "they were met with gunfire as well, but they were able to shoot and kill that suspect".

The attack in the heavily Latino town of Uvalde was the deadliest shooting at a U.S. school since a gunman killed 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012.

The attack was the latest in a seemingly unending string of mass killings at churches, schools, stores and other sites in the U.S. Just 10 days earlier, 10 Black people were shot to death in a racist rampage at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York.

Sibal quits Cong., to fight RS polls with SP support

"It is important to be an independent voice in Parliament. If an independent voice speaks up, then people will believe it is not linked to any political party," Mr. Sibal said, adding that he would not talk about the Congress any more as he was no longer in the party.

Accompanying him for the filing of nomination papers, SP chief and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav said, "... We hope that the questions in the country, such as rising unemployment, inflation, failing law and order, unsafe borders...on several such big issues Sibal *ji* will be able to present the SP's and his views."

Mr. Sibal's is the third high-profile exit that happened soon after the Udaipur *Chintan Shivir* and followed former Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar's departure from the Congress to join the BJP and Gujarat working president Hardik Patel's exit.

With an air of uncertainty around who will be Congress' nominees for the Rajya Sabha elections, there is speculation about more leaving the party.

In the last few months, several senior leaders such as Ashwani Kumar, R.P.N. Singh and Shatrughan Sinha have quit the party.

Member of G-23

Among the most high-profile Ministers in the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance government between 2004 and 2014, Mr. Sibal joined the G-23 or the ginger group that wrote to party president Sonia Gandhi in August 2020, asking for "collective leadership and internal reforms".

The high-profile lawyer, who once defended the Congress in various courts and often in the media as a Minister, questioned the party's style of functioning as it continued to suffer repeated setbacks in Assembly elections after two consecutive Lok Sabha election defeats.

Tipping point

The tipping point came last September when he told reporters at a press conference that "the Congress did not have a full-time president and none knew who was taking important decisions without any accountability".

Though Mr. Sibal did not spell it out, the comment was seen as an attack on former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, who, many believed, was taking decisions in the party despite stepping down from the post in May 2019. Hours later, party workers of Chandni Chowk, a constituency that Mr. Sibal represented earlier, threw "tomatoes and eggs" at his residence.

While the leadership had reached out to G-23 in separate meetings, Mr. Sibal carefully avoided them, including the three-day Udaipur *Chintan Shivir* that was meant to brainstorm the Congress' revival.

(With inputs from Omar Rashid in Lucknow)

Poll panel moves against 'non-existent' parties

Names of 87 of them to be deleted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has decided to initiate graded action against more than 2,100 Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs) for non-compliance of statutory requirements under the Representation of the People (RP) Act.

On Wednesday, the ECI said that during a verification exercise, 87 such parties were found to be non-existent. They would be deleted from the list and their benefits under the Symbols Order (1968) withdrawn.

The particulars of 2,174 RUPPs – which did not submit contribution reports – would be sent to the Department of Revenue for taking all consequential action. The same recommendation has been made for three parties that were indulging in financial improprieties, including using bogus donation receipts, forming shell entities and facilitating accommodation entries.

The ECI said over 92% of the then listed 2,354 RUPPs did not file their contribution reports in 2019. While 199 claimed ₹445 crore of income tax exemption in 2018-19, 219 claimed ₹608 crore exemption in 2019-20. Of these, 66 had sought exemption without submitting the mandatory contribution reports. Also, 2,056 parties were yet to file annual audited accounts for 2019.

Only 623 contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election. Of the 115 parties headquartered in Assam, Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, which contested the Assembly elections in 2021, only 15 had filed election expenditure statements till date.

U.S. ramps up efforts to bring India on board with sanctions

Treasury official to discuss Russian oil purchases during visit

SUHASINI HAIDAR
VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

Stepping up the U.S. effort to bring India on board with its sanctions against Russia, Washington has sent another senior official to discuss India's oil purchases and plans to use the rupee-rouble payment mechanism to circumvent sanctions.

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes Elizabeth Rozenberg arrived in India on Wednesday ahead of meetings with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) officials in Mumbai, as well as officials of the Union Finance Ministry, Home Ministry and External Affairs Ministry in Delhi, officials said.

Ms. Rozenberg will also discuss the upcoming plenary session of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in June, where Pakistan's grey listing will be reviewed and possible measures against Russia could be discussed.

Elizabeth Rozenberg

According to the U.S. Embassy spokesperson, Ms. Rozenberg's travel is "part of a continued [U.S.] treasury effort to engage with partners and allies around the implementation and enforcement of the unprecedented multilateral sanctions and export controls imposed on Russia for its war against Ukraine".

According to collated reports by agencies, Indian refiners have placed orders for 40 million barrels of Russian oil in the first two months of the war, more than double the figure for all of 2021.

Indian officials have explained that the rupee-rouble mechanism has been in existence for years, and has never been dismantled. "What we are figuring out now is if that mechanism can be invoked in light of the global moves to check Russia," a senior official said, reiterating the decision to import more volumes of discounted Russian oil to bolster the country's battle against runaway inflation driven by effective crude oil prices for Indian imports hovering around $110 a barrel.

Nitish to hold caste census meet on June 1

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

After much political murmuring, an all-party meeting led by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over conducting a caste-based census will be held on June 1, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the ruling alliance partner of the Janata Dal(United), too is likely to participate in it.

Bihar Parliamentary Affairs Minister and senior JD (U) functionary Vijay Kumar Choudhary said all political parties have given their consent for the meeting to be held from 4 p.m.

"Based on the meeting, the matter can be brought before the Cabinet for a final decision to be taken at the government level," he said.

"The Chief Minister had announced to conduct a caste-based census on the State's resources after the Prime Minister expressed his inability to include the caste enumeration along with the census," Mr. Choudhary said on Tuesday.

Sources in the BJP told *The Hindu* that the party too was likely to participate in the meeting. BJP State president Sanjay Jaiswal has chosen to keep mum over the issue but some senior leaders said "all is well" in the NDA.

Earlier, when an all-party delegation had gone to meet Mr. Modi to demand a caste-based census, BJP leader Janak Ram too was a member of it.

'MPs don't need political clearance from PM or govt.'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Members of Parliament do not require political clearance from the Prime Minister, Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala said on Wednesday.

The issue rose against the backdrop of a controversy over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's comments in meetings in London where he made critical remarks about the general political and social conditions in India. Government sources had alleged that he did not seek "political clearance" before leaving for London.

"MPs don't need political clearance from Prime Minister or government unless they are part of Official Delegation. Please don't blindly follow the PMO WhatsApp suggestions sent to TV channels," Mr. Surjewala said.

Official sources, however, said that Members of Parliament have in the past taken political clearance from the government if they intended to receive "foreign hospitality".

ED initiates probe in visa scam case involving Karti

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated a money laundering probe on the basis of a case recently registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation involving Congress MP Karti Chidambaram and others in connection with the alleged visa scam.

The CBI earlier arrested his close associate S. Bhaskar Raman and got his custody from a special court for interrogation.

It is alleged that Mr. Raman collected a bribe of ₹50 lakh for allowing the reuse of project visas issued to Talwandi Sabo Power Ltd., which was in the process of setting up a 1,980-MW thermal power plant at Mansa in Punjab.

EC announces LS, Assembly byelections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha will contest the Town Bordowali Assembly seat in Agartala in byelection to be held on June 23.

The Election Commission on Wednesday announced byelections to three Lok Sabha and seven Assembly seats in six States.

The Lok Sabha seats are Azamgarh and Rampur in Uttar Pradesh, vacated by Samajwadi Party leaders Akhilesh Yadav and Mohammed Azam Khan, respectively, and Sangrur in Punjab vacated by Bhagwant Mann who became the Chief Minister of the State. The Assembly byelections will be held in Rajinder Nagar in Delhi, Mandar in Jharkhand, Atmakur in Andhra Pradesh, and Agartala, Town Bordowali, Surma and Jubarajnagar in Tripura. The election notification will be issued on May 30, the EC said in a statement. Counted will be held on June 26. The bypolls will help fill vacancies in the electoral college which elects the President.

Protesters clash with police, markets stay shut in Srinagar

Supporters of Yasin Malik gather at his residence and raise slogans

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Most shops at Srinagar's main commercial hub and its adjoining markets remained shut on Wednesday, as Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief Yasin Malik was awarded with a life imprisonment in a terror financing case by a court in New Delhi. The shutdown was observed in absence of any bandh call by separatists.

Security forces were deployed in large numbers in volatile pockets of the city "to ward off any protests". Markets also remained closed in large parts of the old city, including Hawal, Nowhatta, Zaina Kadal, and Safa Kadal.

Protesters, including women, assembled at the residence of Malik in Maisuma in Srinagar. Malik's sister was seen reciting the Quran, ahead of the verdict.

Protesters raised pro-Malik and pro-freedom slogans and many clashed with the security forces. Police used smoke shells to disperse the crowd.

Tense moments: Protesters clashing with police in Srinagar on Wednesday. •NISSAR AHMAD

Malik's wife Mushaal Hussein Mullick, who is in Pakistan, has said he was facing "trumped up" charges.

"The fear of losing power over the people of Kashmir is driving the Indian government to take such harsh stances which have no legal base. India's BJP wants to punish my husband to increase Modi's vote bank and make the people of J&K leaderless. India must end these war crimes and politics of hatred and intolerance," Ms. Malik said, in a tweet.

Incarcerated Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, in a statement, said, "Malik since 1994 pursued peaceful and democratic means of conflict resolution. Malik actively participated in all negotiations held on Kashmir after 2000 under various regimes in New Delhi and Islamabad. Yet, he was arrested and has now been convicted in invented cases under draconian laws. Actually, he is being punished for his political beliefs on the J&K dispute and for representing the sentiments of its people."

Pak. Foreign Minister writes to UN rights chief

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has written to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet to urge India to acquit Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik of all charges and ensure his immediate release from prison. The Foreign Office said in a statement that the Foreign Minister, as part of Pakistan's ongoing efforts to draw the attention of the international community to the situation in Kashmir, sent the letter to Ms. Bachelet on May 24. PTI

Role of media in promoting health lauded

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday applauded the Indian media for its role during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the 17th Asia Media Summit, via video conferencing, the Minister said that Indian media ensured that awareness messages on COVID-19, important government guidelines and free consultations with doctors reached everyone in the country.

Doordarshan and All India Radio significantly delivered on their mandate of public service by setting the trend through prompt coverage, ground reports and organising programmes on public health, he said.

Crediting the Press Information Bureau's Fact Check Unit, he said the platform strongly fought against the menace of fake news and misinformation on a real time basis.

The theme of the Asia Media Summit this year is 'Future Forward, Reimagining Media'.

Outbursts against Centre unwarranted: officials

They react to States' stance on GST

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

Taking on the recent spate of "repeated, constant and instant" outbursts against the Centre by some States on fiscal issues, top government officials asserted on Wednesday that the criticism of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime's functioning based on a Supreme Court verdict last week was as ill-informed as the critique of fuel tax cuts announced last Saturday.

"It is quite clear where the shameless hypocrisy lies," an official said. "Even before the Supreme Court judgment in a GST matter, where it simply reiterated the existing system, was uploaded for public view, they were holding press conferences stating the court has upheld their fiscal rights," the official added, hinting at States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu that reacted soon after news broke of the top court's decision scrapping a GST levy on freight services for imports.

Similarly, while States like Tamil Nadu had criticised the Centre's plea for them to cut local levies on petroleum products to ease inflation, the Centre had only "exhorted" them to consider it, not imposed the move as was being implied, the official explained.

"Yet, the Kerala and Maharashtra governments announced cuts in their State levies after the Centre's initiative. Why did they feel the need to do so if we were 'imposing' on them?" the official asked.

Loss of revenue

On States fretting over losing their revenue powers due to GST and the levy of cess on fuel products "thus depriving them of their share of revenues", the official emphasised that the States were not alone in giving up those powers to operationalise GST.

"As many as 18 cesses levied by the Centre, that yielded over ₹56,000 crore in 2016-17, were subsumed into the GST. This means the funds that were going exclusively to the Centre before GST are now shareable with States because of the shift," another official pointed out.

Curbs on sugar to ensure supply: govt.

Farmers slam move, say Centre is closing all avenues for better prices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre maintained on Wednesday that the festival season starting from October and the commitment to stabilise prices in the domestic market were the reasons for restricting sugar exports beyond 10 million tonnes (100 lakh metric tonnes).

Farmers, however, were suspicious of the decision, and said the Centre was closing all avenues for better prices for their produce.

Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, told presspersons that the Centre's first priority was to ensure sufficient availability of sugar for consumption at a reasonable rate, and thereafter divert more sugar into ethanol production.

"During the festival period of October and November, the demand for sugar increases and therefore, the Centre is committed to ensure availability of sugar for the lean period," Mr. Pandey said.

The government says the demand for sugar will go up during the festival season.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) issued an order on Tuesday stating that export of sugar would be allowed with specific permission from the Directorate of Sugar, Department of Food and Public Distribution between June 1 and October 31, or till further orders, whichever is earlier. Mr. Pandey said the department would release Export Release Orders (EROs) on receiving applications from sugar mills and exporters. "Sugar mills will apply for ERO for dispatch of sugar from mills for export. Exporters will apply for export of sugar out of country. Both need to apply online through National Single Window System (NSWS)," he added.

"Wholesale prices of sugar in India are range-bound between ₹3,150-₹3,500 per quintal, while retail prices are also within control in the range of ₹36-₹44 per kg in different parts of the country. The global situation reflects a shortage of sugar, especially due to lower production in Brazil. This may trigger the demand globally and so as to safeguard domestic availability and interests, DGFT issued an order to maintain domestic availability and price stability of sugar in the country during sugar season 2021-22 (October-September)," he said.

The move has irked farmers' groups. "The direct impact of this decision is not on sugar price but on farmers. The traders will take it as a pretext to reduce the cost they pay to farmers. The government recently announced such decisions on wheat, sugar and onion," Ajit Nawale, general secretary of the Maharashtra unit of the All India Kisan Sabha, said.

Jitender Singh Hudda, a farmers' leader from Shamli in western Uttar Pradesh, said farmers got a better price for sugar cane after several years due to exports. "We were told that there is enough sugar stock in the country. The next crushing season would have started in October after four months. This government is closing all opportunities for farmers. We would have got access to more markets and better prices because of the international situation. The sugar production is regularly surplus. They should have looked at the cultivate area before imposing restrictions. Monsoon reports are also normal. The quota release system is already there for sugar mills. So domestic markets wouldn't have been impacted at all," Mr. Hudda said.

BJP drafts plan to fortify 'weak booths'

Party seeks to expand footprint and increase its tally in the next Lok Sabha polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J.P. Nadda on Wednesday held a series of meetings with Ministers in the Narendra Modi government, and party leaders from across the country to draw up an elaborate programme for Ministers to travel to various parts of the country to mark Mr. Modi's completion of eight years as Prime Minister. Plans were also made to strengthen 74,000 electoral booths, and organise visits to 144 Lok Sabha seats, where the party considers itself weak or has no Member of Parliament at the moment.

Each Minister will visit a "cluster of seats" decided in advance. Mr. Nadda has formed a committee, headed by BJP vice-president Baijayant Panda, to accentuate booth outreach activities in the selected 74,000 booths as preparation for the 2024 general elections. This campaign will run between May 31 to June 15.

J.P. Nadda

Mr. Nadda is hoping that this exercise too will result in positive outcomes like those yielded by the "*vistarak*" programme that was launched by former party president and current Home Minister Amit Shah in 2016.

2016 exercise

The party had then identified 113 seats that it had never won but where, in many cases, it stood second or secured a notable number of votes. Party workers were deployed for organisational work. Out of the 113 seats for which *vistaraks* were utilised in 2016, the BJP won around 80 seats in the 2019 polls.

BJP vice-president Dilip Ghosh, general secretary C.T. Ravi, and the party's Scheduled Caste Morcha head Lal Singh Arya are members of the steering committee heading the new exercise. MPs have been asked to strengthen 100 "weak booths" in their respective constituencies and a 30-member team will be formed for the purpose, party sources said.

Similarly, party MLAs have been given the task of strengthening 10 "weak booths" in their constituencies.

The broader idea behind this exercise is to expand the BJP's footprint and increase its tally in the next Lok Sabha elections.

R.C.P. Singh denies rift with Nitish, JD(U)-BJP differences

Minister says he will meet CM in Patna

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

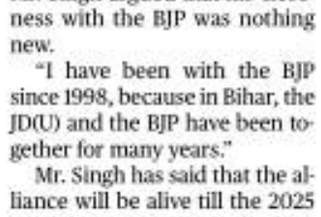
Union Steel Minister R.C.P. Singh has finally spoken up about the speculation about his future in the Narendra Modi Cabinet because of a delay by the Janata Dal(U) in declaring his candidature for the coming Rajya Sabha election.

Speaking to reporters in Delhi before heading to a Cabinet meeting, he dismissed the claims about differences between him and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and also about a possible split between the JD(U) and the BJP.

"There are no differences between me and Nitish*ji* on any issue, and today evening I am going to Patna," he said. The deadline for filing the nominations, he said, is May 31 and there is still time for that.

However, according to sources, he spent a week in Patna trying to get an appointment with Mr. Kumar but could not manage to meet the Chief Minister. The JD(U) circles are abuzz about his impending exit from the Ministry and all eyes are on Mr. Kumar, who has been authorised by the party to take the final call on the issue.

Many in the party in the past have claimed that Mr. Singh had gone against the party's decision for "proportional representation" in the Modi Cabinet and instead of four berths, he settled for one and that too for himself.



R.C.P. Singh

Mr. Singh rejected these conjectures. "I have clarified this over a dozen times and I shall say it again. It is a baseless rumour. I took oath as a Union Minister with the consent of Nitish Kumar. If indeed these theories are correct, why would Nitish*ji* let me continue in the Cabinet?"

Mr. Singh was inducted into the Cabinet last July during a reshuffle. Mr. Kumar did not attend the oath-taking ceremony and neither did he issue any public congratulatory message, which was read as his disapproval of Mr. Singh's elevation.

Party insiders have pointed to his growing proximity with the BJP which, at times, has come at the cost of the JD(U). Mr. Singh argued that his closeness with the BJP was nothing new.

"I have been with the BJP since 1998, because in Bihar, the JD(U) and the BJP have been together for many years."

Mr. Singh has said that the alliance will be alive till the 2025 Assembly election.

Goyal defends wheat export ban at Davos forum

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A large number of European countries have imposed regulatory measures for ensuring food security, said Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Mr. Goyal defended the May 13 decision to prohibit wheat export and said the move was aimed at ensuring price stability and to help vulnerable countries and communities.

"Today, 22 countries of Europe have regulations on exports to protect their food security. Different countries in different points in time had to take extraordinary measures in public interest," said Mr. Goyal during an interactive session in defence of India's prohibition on wheat exports.

Mr. Goyal said there was a lot of misinformation going around about India's decision and said he had clarified the matter with the top representatives of the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund.

"India traditionally has not been an exporter of grain. Our farmers toiled and ushered in green revolution," he said, arguing that India's production of wheat had been primarily for the consumption of its own population. This year, a heatwave that "shrivelled" wheat crop coincided with the war in Ukraine which sent shockwaves through the global wheat market as Ukraine was a major supplier of wheat.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
IRRIGATION & CAD DEPARTMENT
Irrigation Circle, Hill Colony, Nalgonda District

Tender is invited by Irrigation Circle, Hill Colony Nalgonda District vide **Notice No: 06SE/ICHC/2022-23 Dated: 23.05.2022** for work **"Repairs to Spillway slope and bucket portion of Nagarjuna Sagar masonry dam including repairs to spillway approach road after floods of 2022 at Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, Nalgonda dist., Telangana"** for an **ECV Rs.: 16,54,99,407/-** is available from 25.05.2022 to 01.06.2022 at 3.00 PM and last date for receipt of bid is 01.06.2022 at 5.00 PM for further details see in e-procurement website.
DIPR R.O.No.2150-PPCL/ADVT/1/2022-23 Dt: 25.05.2022 Sd/- K. Dharma, Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Circle, Hill colony

Employees' State Insurance Corporation Hospital, Peenya
(Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India)
Sy. No. 11-65-1, Plot No. 1, 5th Main Road (FTI Campus)
Yeshwanthpur, Bengaluru - 560 022
Phone: 080-23723466, E-mail: ms-peenya.ka@esic.nic.in

INVITATION OF PROPOSAL FOR PROVIDING YOGA INSTRUCTOR

Proposal is invited from reputed / recognized non profit earning Yoga Institutions / NGO for providing qualified Yoga Instructor on Full Time.
The details are available on our official web site **www.esic.nic.in**

Sd/-
Medical Superintendent

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LIMITED
CIN– U40102RJ2000SGC016484 (A Govt. of Rajasthan Undertaking)
O/o SE (Fuel), 205, Dreamax Plaza, Sahkar Marg, Jaipur-302005
Online Tender Notice: TN-01(RVU2223SLOB00392)
E-tenders are invited for **Lifting/taking delivery of raw coal from SECL collieries on behalf of RVUN, transportation of raw coal from mines to nearest Railway siding and loading of same into Railway wagons for dispatch to RVUN's TPSs and completing all documentation as required by Coal Company, Railways & RVUN for year 2022-23.** Tender details are available on websites http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in (for e-tender), www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvunl & www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in.
Raj.samwad/C/22/2317 RVUN/PR-3670 Superintending Engineer (Fuel)

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY - e-TENDER NOTICE
Tender No : 2, 8, 18, 19 & 20/SE/PHC/PKD (1)KIFB 2017-18 -CWSS TO KARIMBA, KONGAD AND MUNDUR (PART) PANCHAYATHS - PHASE I-PACKAGE 2-BALANCE WORKS. (2) JJM 2021-22 - CWSS to Elappully (3) Thachanttukara (4) Alanallur and (5) Kottopadam Panchayaths - Construction of GLSR, Providing distribution system, road restoration and providing FHTCs. EMD : ₹ 200000 - 500000. Tender fee: ₹11800 - 17700. Last Date for submitting Tender: 13.06.2022, 03:00pm. Phone : 0491-2544927.
Website: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
KWA-JB-GL-6-265-2022-23 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Palakkad

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
Regd Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala - 147001
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website: www.pspcl.in
(Contact number 9646118721)
Tender Enquiry No. QW-299/PO-W Dated 26.05.2022
Chief Engineer/Stores & Workshops Organization, Sandoha Nagar, PSPCL, Ludhiana, invites E-tender of 65,000 no. V Shape Cross arms manufactured form Mild Steel Angle conforming to IS: 2062/1992 (Grade-A quality) and section details as per IS: 808/1989 & tolerances as per IS: 1852/1985. The edge cutting of Cross arms should be smooth and at right angle. The seam welding of joints should be continuous and uniform on one side. The fabricated Cross Arms should have level surface. The Red Oxide primer coating of the cross arms should have smooth finish. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 26.05.2022 from 02.00 pm onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in
C 193/22 RO no - 76155/12/875/2021/14494

मुख्यमंत्री निःशुल्क दवा योजना
Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Limited, Jaipur
Gandhi Block, Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur – 302005, India
Phone No: 0141-2228066, 2228064 Fax No. 0141-2228065
Website: http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in
CIN:U24232RJ2011SGC035067 E_mail : edprmsc@nic.in
F.02(117)/RMSCL/Proc./Sutures/NIB-05/2022/398 Dated: 11.05.2022
Notice Inviting E-Bid
E-bids are invited up to 6.00 PM of 06.06.2022 E bid for Rate Contract cum Supply and Empanelment of Sutures (Drug Items). Details of NIB-05/2022 may be seen in the Bidding Documents at our office or at the website of State Public procurement Portal **(UBN MSC2223GLRC00013) http://sppp.raj.nic.in, www.dipronlins.org, http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, www.rmsc.rajasthan.health.gov.in** and may be downloaded from there.
Note:- If any amendment is carried out in the tender specifications and terms & conditions following pre-bid meeting, the same will be uploaded on the Departmental website **www.rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in, sppp.raj.nic.in** and **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**. In case any inconvenience is felt, please contact on telephone number i.e. 0141-2228064
Executive Director (Procurement)
Raj.Samwad/C/22/2289 **RMSCL**

Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited
Regd. Office: TANSIDCO Corporate Office, Thiru.Vi.Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032. Phone: 2250 1461 / 2250 1422 Fax: 2250 0792
E-Mail: ho.sidco@nic.in, Website: www.tansidco.tn.gov.in
TENDER NOTICE NO: 4161(TN-5)SE/DB/2022 **Date : 24.05.2022**
For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited, Chennai-32, Sealed **Pre-Qualification & Price Bid (Two Cover)** tender is invited from the **Class I & Above** contractors for the work mentioned below.

S No.	Name of Work	EMD	Tentative Value of Work	Period of Completion
1.	Construction of Flatted Factory Complex for Silver Anklet Micro Units consists of Ground + 3 Floors at Ariyagoundanpatti in Salem West Taluk, Salem District.	7.35 Lakhs	1450.00 Lakhs	24 Months

Last date for receipt of tender - **28.06.2022** upto 3:00 PM; Date of pre-qualification tender opening – **28.06.2022** at 3:30 PM; Pre-Qualification & Price Bid Documents available for sale from **13.06.2022 to 27.06.2022**; Cost of Bid Documents including GST - **Rs.17,708/-**. The other details and terms & conditions may be obtained from the office of the Superintending Engineer i/c, TANSIDCO, Chennai - 600032 and please visit the websites: **www.tenders.tn.gov.in & www.tansidco.tn.gov.in** and the tender documents may be downloaded at free of cost.
DIPR/2497/Tender/2022 SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER i/c TANSIDCO, CHENNAI-32

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
TAMBARAM CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
RE -TENDER INVITING NOTICE_3rd CALL
Roc.No.2552/2021/E1 Date 25.05.2022
Government of Tamil Nadu sanctioned an Construction of Daily Market in Tambaram city under Kalaignar Nagarpuram Membattu Thittam (KNMT) 2021-22 in Chengalpattu District. Under this scheme the Corporation Commissioner, Tambaram invites sealed bids from the eligible and qualified contractors for the following works as detailed in the table given below:

Sl. No	Packages	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs	Tender document available from	Tender Opening	Period of Completion
1	Construction of Daily Market (Duraisamy) at Ward No.35, Block No.17, Old S.No. 334/1A, 1A, 1B, 321P, New T.S No. 21,2/2, Block 17	1375.00	27.05.2022 (10.00 am) to 23.6.2022 4.00pm	24.06.2022 (3.30 pm)	9 Months
	Total	1375.00			

Pre-Bid conference 10.06.2022 at 11.00 am in the Corporation office, Tambaram
Tender document and schedule available in **https://tntenders.gov.in** can be downloaded from **27.05.2022.** The Bidding document will be received by the Commissioner, Tambaram City Municipal Corporation by way of off- line also in 2 cover system up to **24.06.2022, 3.00 pm** Earnest Money Deposit, 1% of the value of work should be submitted along with the tender. If e-tender, the EMD should be dropped in the tender box before closure time. It is **at 3.00pm on 24.06.2022.** Evaluation of bid will be done as per Tender Transparency Act 1998 of Government of Tamil Nadu and rules there us. If the said tender date happens to be a holiday, the tenders will be opened on the next working day. The Corporation Commissioner reserves the rights to accept or reject any bidding document at any time without assigning any reason thereof. Eligibility criteria and other details can be had from the Bidding document. **For other details contact e-mail address: comm.tambaram@tn.gov.in**
DIPR/ 2593 /TENDER/2022 **Commissioner, Tambaram City Municipal Corporation**

OFFICE OF THE ROURKELA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
UDITNAGAR, ROURKELA, ODISHA-769012
E-mail ID : rourkelamunicipality@gmail.com
RFP No. 6749 Date: 24.05.2022
Notice Inviting Request for Proposal (RFP) for Supply, Installation, Operation and Maintenance of Variable Message Signboard at Identified Locations of Rourkela City in the State of Odisha
Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) invites Request for Proposal (RFP) from the reputed Intending Agencies/ Suppliers/Bidders for Supply, Installation, Operation and Maintenance of 20 Nos. of Variable Message Signboards at Identified Locations of Rourkela City in the State of Odisha.
The RFP is to be submitted in closed covers addressed to the Commissioner, Rourkela Municipal Corporation, Uditnagar, Rourkela, Dist.-Sundargarh (Odisha), PIN-769012 on or before **21.06.2022 at 11.00 AM** through Speed Post/ Registered Post/ Courier/ or by Hand.
The complete RFP document can be downloaded from the RMC website (**www.rmc.nic.in**) from **25.05.2022** onwards.
Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the RFP without assigning any reason thereof.
Commissioner,
Rourkela Municipal Corporation
C-374 OIPR-13131/11/0037/2223

IN BRIEF

SpiceJet flights delayed after ransomware attack

NEW DELHI

Several SpiceJet flights across the country faced long delays throughout the day on Wednesday, which the airline said was due to a ransomware attack on its systems. Many passengers complained on Twitter that they had to wait for several hours at the airport without any assistance from the airline. A passenger also tweeted a video from inside a SpiceJet flight from Delhi to Dharamshala about a three-hour wait with no "justified response from the team". The airline did not specify which system was affected.

'India committed to digital health system'

NEW DELHI

Under Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, India has embarked on digital transformation of healthcare in India. The focus is on creation of a longitudinal electronic health record for more than 1.3 billion people of India, said Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya at the World Economic Forum annual meeting while delivering the opening remarks for "Unlocking the power of digital health" and "Closing vaccines gap" session on Wednesday.

Bihar varsity closed after row over student's death

PATNA

The Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University in Samastipur was closed *sine die* after protests and vandalism by students following death of a B.Tech student in a road accident on May 21. The protesting students' alleged negligence by the PHC on the campus caused the death of Akhil Sahu, a student from Rajasthan and ransacked the PHC, the academic building, and the residence of Vice-Chancellor. An FIR has been lodged against seven named and several unnamed students for vandalism.

78% students found remote learning burdensome: survey

As many as 24% said they had no digital devices at home, according to NAS 2021

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Nearly 80% students found learning at home during the pandemic "burdensome" and felt that they learnt better in school with help from peers, according to the government's survey of more than one lakh schools across the country.

The Ministry of Education on Wednesday released its National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2021 report, which assesses the health of the school education system in the country through a survey of children's learning competencies at Classes 3, 5, 8 and 10.

Nearly 34 lakh students of 1.18 lakh schools in 720 districts from government, government-aided and private-unaided schools participated in the exercise.

The survey recorded perception of sampled students on remote learning during the pandemic and found that 78% students found it burdensome and one that had too many assignments for them. Nearly the same percentage of students (80%) also felt that learning was better in schools because of the help they received from their classmates. As many as 24% students said they had no digital device at home. Though 45% students found the experience "joyful", 38% also said that they had difficulties in learning.

Online learning

The table lists the perception of students on learning at home during the pandemic, according to the National Achievement Survey 2021 report

Perception of learning at home	Share of students (in %)
Joyful, was fun	45
Faced difficulty in learning	38
No difference, same as school	50
Burdensome, lot of assignments	78
No digital device at home	24
Learn better in school with peers help	80
Lot of time to learn new things	70

Performance in subjects

The report also evaluated competencies of students in subjects such as mathematics, languages, and environmental studies (EVS) for Classes 3 and 5; language, mathematics, science and social science for Class 8; and language, mathematics, science, social science and English for Class 10.

It found that out of a score of 500, students across various classes performed better in languages, but lagged behind in subjects like mathematics and science.

For example, in Class 3, students scored the highest in languages (323), followed by EVS (307) and mathematics (306). In Class 5 too, students were better in languages (309), as compared to mathematics (284) and EVS (283). Class 8 students scored 302 in English, whereas in maths, they scored 255, and science 250.

It also showed that across various subjects and classes, SC, ST and OBC students perform worse than general category students.

Dreams take wing: Army gets first woman combat pilot

Captain Abhilasha Barak was commissioned in 2018

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Captain Abhilasha Barak has become the first woman to join the Army Aviation Corps as combat aviator after completion of a six-month combat Army aviation course.

"She has been awarded the coveted wings along with 36 Army pilots today by Lieutenant General A. K. Suri, Director-General and Colonel Commandant, Army Aviation, during a valedictory ceremony at the Combat Army Aviation Training School, Nashik," the Army said on Wednesday.

Capt. Barak hails from Haryana and was commissioned into the Army Air Defence Corps in September 2018. She is the daughter of Colonel S. Om Singh (retd). Capt. Barak has done a number of professional military courses before joining the Army Aviation Corps, officials stated.

Flying colours: Capt. Abhilasha Barak gets wings at the Army Aviation Training School, Nashik. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Army Aviation Corps, the youngest Corps of the Army, was formed on November 1, 1986 and over the years, has expanded with addition of new units and equipment such as Cheetah and the advanced light helicopter Dhruv, weaponised Rudra and the light combat helicopter.

In August 2021, Army Aviation got control of the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), which were earlier with the Artillery, bringing all aviation assets under one roof. Since the stand-off in eastern Ladakh in 2020, the Army Aviation had seen a quantum jump in the employment of helicopters along the northern borders.

Frame policies to protect LGBTIQ+ workers, says ILO

A national policy will help in ending discrimination and exclusion, says document released by the world body

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A document released on Wednesday by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on "Inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) persons in the world of work" recommended member countries, employers' organisations and representatives of workers to launch social protection programmes to remove barriers that LGBTIQ+ persons face in society.

Citing data from various sources, the ILO document said discrimination has an economic cost not just to LGBTIQ+ persons and their families but also to enterprises and national economies.

The ILO added that around the world, LGBTIQ+ persons face harassment, violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.

It said a national policy and labour law review will allow governments to assess their country's work policy environment for LGBTIQ+ persons. "This will allow the identification of concrete steps for improving the legal and policy environment, ending discrimination and exclusions, and complying with international instruments," the document said.

The ILO said consultation with LGBTIQ+ communities and social dialogue with employers' and workers' organisations are key. "This will allow the identification of barriers faced by LGBTIQ+ persons when entering the labour market and accessing government schemes, including those on social protection," the document said.

LGBTIQ+ persons face harassment and violence on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. •FILE PHOTO

The ILO asked the governments to work with small and medium industry associations, sectoral unions and informal economy workers' associations to monitor discrimination in the informal economy and address stigma and discrimination related to gender and sexual identity.

Encouraging employers' organisations to end sexual discrimination at workplaces, the ILO said it makes business sense to work on LGBTIQ+ inclusion in the workplace.

Workplace diversity

"Studies have shown that diversity in the workplace, including LGBTIQ+ persons, is better for business. It signals a creative environment that creates the right conditions for economic growth. Employers' organisations can provide policy guidance to their members, undertake advocacy and raise awareness on including LGBTIQ+ persons in workplaces, promote social dialogue and collective bargaining, and facilitate learning and sharing of good practices among members," the document said.

The ILO asked trade unions to help LGBTIQ+ workers to organise and exercise their right to freedom of association. The ILO said workers' associations can also ensure that issues affecting LGBTIQ+ workers are represented in collective bargaining agreements with employers and in workplace policies and other tools.

"Many LGBTIQ+ workers, particularly those in smaller workplaces, may feel isolated without visible LGBTIQ+ peers or allies," the document said.

Sena finds fault with Stalin's gesture

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

The Shiv Sena on Wednesday hit out at Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin for felicitating A.G. Perarivalan, a convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination who was released recently.

Sena leader and MP Sanjay Raut said Mr. Stalin "dignified" the former Prime Minister's assassin and remarked that it set "a dangerous ideal".

The Sena, an ally of the Congress, asked what Mr. Stalin was trying to prove by his action. Whatever be one's politics, it did not behove a State's Chief Minister to show respect to a Prime Minister's assassin in this manner, he added.

WHO seeks India's help to test monkeypox cases

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
PUNE

The World Health Organization Country Office for India has sought the assistance of India's – ICMR-National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, – to test suspected cases of monkeypox for the south-east Asia region (SEAR) member-states.

The SEAR accounts for one-quarter of the world's population, 40% of the global poor and already bears approximately 30% of the overall global disease burden. The request comes at a time when more than 10 countries, where monkeypox is not endemic, have reported outbreaks of the viral disease, with over 100 confirmed or suspected infections, mostly in Europe.

NIV Director Priya Abraham said: "This is not the first time India is extending its laboratory and diagnostic support to countries of this region. We have done it during COVID also. For monkeypox testing, we have agreed in principle to help out and will await more formal requests from individual countries".

'Unusual outbreaks'

Stating that India has not yet reported a case of monkeypox, she said "recent monkeypox outbreaks are unusual because they are occurring in countries where the virus has not been endemic". "We have two of our Institute's laboratory groups ready to do the testing. We are equipped and prepared," she said.

Supreme Court recognises sex work as a 'profession'

It says police should neither interfere nor take criminal action against adult, consenting sex workers

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

In a significant order recognising sex work as a "profession" whose practitioners are entitled to dignity and equal protection under law, the Supreme Court has directed that police should neither interfere nor take criminal action against adult and consenting sex workers.

"It need not be gainsaid that notwithstanding the profession, every individual in this country has a right to a dignified life under Article 21 of the Constitution," the court observed.

"Sex workers are entitled to equal protection of the law. Criminal law must apply equally in all cases, on the basis of 'age' and 'consent'. When it is clear that the sex worker is an adult and is participating with consent, the police must refrain from interfering or taking any criminal action," a three-judge Bench directed in an order which was passed after invoking special powers under Article 142 of Constitution.

The Bench ordered that sex workers should not be "arrested or penalised or harassed or victimised" whenever there is a raid on any brothel, "since voluntary sex work is not illegal and only running the brothel is unlawful". A child of a sex worker should not be separated from the mother merely on the ground that she is in the sex trade, the court held. "Basic protection of human decency and dignity extends to sex workers and their children," the court noted.

Further, if a minor is found living in a brothel or with sex workers, it should not be presumed that the child was trafficked.

"In case the sex worker claims that he/she is her son/daughter, tests can be done to determine if the claim is correct and if so, the minor should not be forcibly separated," the court ordered.

The court ordered the police to not discriminate against sex workers who lodge a criminal complaint, especially if the offence committed against them is of a sexual nature. Sex workers who are victims of sexual assault should be provided every facility including immediate medico-legal care.

The court said media should take "utmost care not to reveal the identities of sex workers, during arrest, raid and rescue operations, whether as victims or accused and not to publish or telecast any photos that would result in disclosure of such identities".

THE CROSSWORD + 13566

(set by Vidwan)

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@ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

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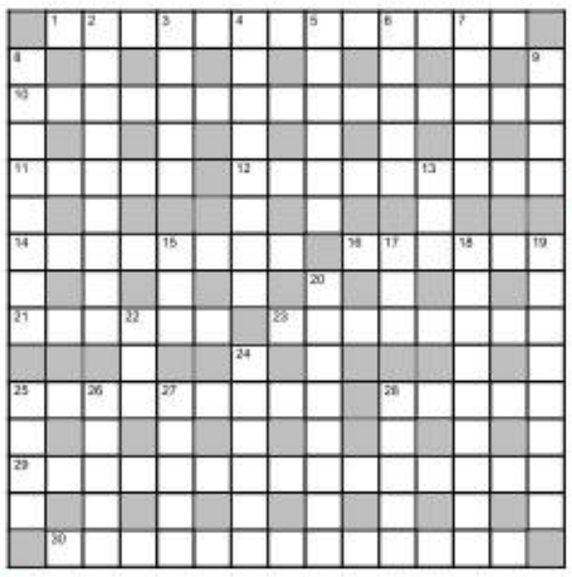


ACROSS

1 'Sexy' Bond is mad about fitness rating (4,4,5)
10 'Unofficial advisers'– back in 'the nicest careers'! (7,8)
11 Untruth, for example, about lord (5)
12 Cut down fat, say for a few months of pregnancy (9)
14 Conservative people quietly sneaking out to have sex (8)
16 Patchwork, like retired top bureaucrats in corporate firm (6)
21 Woods uses it for power, say (6)
23 Seeking success, a special one raced ahead of time (8)
25 Short working memory comprises substantiation essentially (9)
28 Popular 'Dog and Bear' (5)
29 Removing old love letters? (15)
30 Saigon's liquor lacks essence, I mean sounds hard and occasionally chintzy (2,3,4,4)

DOWN

2 Honesty mostly gives best returns straight away (2,3,4)
3 Sort of heavy god (5)
4 Often than not, a teacher has to add small explanation (8)
5 Still it's retrospectively rejected numerical fact (6)
6 Sound cool after losing power following final election (5)
7 Get back! Run away! She's a tennis legend (5)
8 Plucks a large wild flower (8)
9 Russia was 66% of this and 66% of Russia could be this! (4)
13 Communication is part of journalism syllabus (3)
15 Rest inside shelter (3)
17 Naked superhero's charm (3)
18 A drug detective assassinated dons! Small revolutionary! (9)
19 Party food? Warm sandwiches, extremely topline! (8)
20 Iran says "Barbaric one was from earlier Iraq" (8)
22 An article from North East (3)
24 Gap? No matter! (6)
25 Inverted start of week, kind of subdued (4)
26 City where Chairman framed borders of China (5)
27 Some acronym, phrase meaning spirit (5)
28 One's dad crossed limits and a bit callously offered him as sacrifice (5)

SUDOKU

		5	2	4			3	
	8	7		6				
1					7			
			9				2	6
3								5
8	2				6			
			5					8
				8		7	4	
	4			7	3	2		

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13565

S	E	T	T	L	E	A	L	A
C	A	E			U	A	R	
R	E	A	L	I	G	N	O	R
N	L	A	A	E	C	U		
L	E	G	I	S	L	A	T	E
	E	I	A		U	U		
T	I	D	E	S	N	E	A	R
E			E	Y	D		L	
L	A	V	E	N	D	E	R	
R	L			A	R	A		
A	S	I	A		B	O	T	H
I	P		R	E	S	A	E	
A	N	I	S	E	E	D		I
T	E	V			E	N	E	
O	O	D	L	E	S		I	D

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	9	5	6	3	8	7	4	1
3	1	6	2	4	7	5	9	8
7	4	8	1	5	9	3	6	2
1	5	3	7	9	6	2	8	4
8	7	2	4	1	3	6	5	9
4	6	9	8	2	5	1	7	3
9	8	7	3	6	1	4	2	5
5	3	4	9	7	2	8	1	6
6	2	1	5	8	4	9	3	7

FAITH

Glories of Vibhava

In the Vaishnava tradition, it is held that the Lord is manifest in five significant forms to enable people to know about Him and to seek Him. Para is His form in Vaikunta, while Vyuha refers to His specific manifestations in Parkadal. In Vibhava is included all His incarnations, while His indwelling presence in all objects and beings without any exception is known as Antaryami. Archa refers to His presence in the deities worshipped in temples.

In a discourse, Asuri Sri Madhavachariar drew attention to Vedanta Desika's 'Dasa Avatara Stotra' that highlights the 10 main Vibhava incarnations of the Lord taken to achieve specific ends. These avatars also reveal His unlimited auspicious qualities. All His auspicious gunas, jnana, virya, shakti, balam, thejas, aishwarya, as well as His Saushilya, Saulabhya, Vatsalya, etc, are always present in Him in whatever form He incarnates. He can never be without them at any point of time. They are inherent in Him and constitute His very dharma. But in each avatar, in accordance to the demands of the situation, He might not choose to manifest all of them, and instead might opt to reveal some and hide some others. He takes the ferocious form of Narasimha, a combination of a lion and man, when He has to kill Hiranyakasipu who has wronged His bhakta Prahlada. He displays anger during the combat with Hiranyakasipu but at the same time He is the embodiment of compassion towards Prahlada who had reposed unshakable faith in Him.

It is also shown that apart from these 10 avatars, He has taken many more forms. As He has declared in the Gita, He takes birth time and again for the purposes of protecting the good people and destroying the evil doers while also establishing dharma and righteousness in this world.

Khan leads protest march in Islamabad

Government calls ousted Pakistan PM's rally an attempt to 'divide the nation and promote chaos'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday led a convoy of thousands of supporters towards the capital Islamabad in a show of force the new government has attempted to shut down, with clashes breaking out between the police and protesters.

Since being removed from power through a no-confidence vote last month, the cricket star turned politician has heaped pressure on the country's fragile new coalition rulers by staging mass rallies, touting a claim he was turned out from office in a "foreign conspiracy".

Mobilising people: Imran Khan waving to supporters upon arriving on a helicopter to lead a rally in Swabai on Wednesday. He called for a sit-in until fresh elections were called. • AFP

Call for polls

In a centrepiece showdown with his rivals, Mr. Khan had called for supporters of his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party to gather in Islamabad and stage a sit-in until fresh elections are called.

"No obstacle can stop us, we will cross all the barriers and will reach... Islamabad," Mr. Khan declared, flanked by more than 20,000 supporters.

The government headed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has pledged to stop the convoy from entering the city, calling the rally an attempt to "divide the nation and promote chaos".

All major roads surrounding Islamabad, where a heavy security presence is in place, were blocked off with shipping containers while entry and exit points of major nearby cities were also cut off.

Sporadic clashes

Sporadic clashes broke out between police and protesters who have tried to clear the roads, with tear gas fired in several cities.

Mr. Khan joined the march in dramatic fashion, arriving in a helicopter that touched down on a motorway clogged with supporters outside the city of Mardan, 100 kilometres northwest of Islamabad.

The convoy later crossed a bridge that straddles PTI-run Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and government-run Punjab province, where shipping containers blocking the route were pushed to the side of the road by protesters.

"When we reached here, we had a tough clash with the police. But they fled and we were able to clear the bridge for Imran Khan," said Zulfiqar Khan, a 42 year-old labourer, in Attock.

SC intervenes

The Supreme Court on Wednesday held an emergency session, ordering the government and PTI leaders to hold urgent negotiations.

It also ordered the release of supporters detained by police.

More than 1,700 people have been arrested since police began raiding the homes of PTI supporters on Monday night, said the Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, who has previously accused protesters of planning to carry weapons at the march.

Schools in the capital and neighbouring Rawalpindi were closed and all exams cancelled, while a state of emergency was declared at all hospitals, with staff put on alert.

'We have to act', says Biden after Texas school shooting

He makes a renewed push for restrictions on firearms

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

Lamenting a uniquely American tragedy, an anguished and angry President Joe Biden delivered an urgent call for new restrictions on firearms after a gunman shot and killed at least 19 children at a Texas elementary school.

Mr. Biden spoke on Tuesday night from the White House barely an hour after returning from a five-day trip to Asia that was bracketed by mass shootings in the U.S. He pleaded for action to address gun violence after years of failure – and bitterly blamed firearm manufacturers and their supporters for blocking legislation in Washington.

'"When in God's name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby?" Mr. Biden said with emotion. "Why are we willing to live with this carnage? Why do we keep letting this happen?"

Joe Biden

With first lady Jill Biden standing by his side in the Roosevelt Room, the President, who has suffered the loss of two of his own children – though not to gun violence – spoke in visceral terms about the grief of the loved ones of the victims and the pain that will endure for the students who survived.

"To lose a child is like having a piece of your soul ripped away," Mr. Biden said.

"There's a hollowness in your chest. You feel like you're being sucked into it and never going to be able to get out," Mr. Biden added.

He called on the nation to hold the victims and families in prayer – but also to work harder to prevent the next tragedy, "It's time we turned this pain into action," he said.

It was just a week earlier that Biden, on the eve of his overseas trip, traveled to Buffalo to meet with victims' families after a racist, hate-filled shooter killed 10 Black people at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York.

Bills mooted

"The idea that an 18-year-old kid can walk into a gun store and buy two assault weapons is just wrong," Mr. Biden said.

Late on Tuesday, Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer set in motion possible action on two House-passed Bills to expand federally required background checks for gun purchases, but no votes have been scheduled.

Four bombs kill at least 12 in Afghanistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

Four bombs ripped through minibuses and a mosque in Afghanistan on Wednesday, killing at least 12 persons, officials said.

The number of bomb attacks have dropped across the country since the Taliban seized power last year in August, but several deadly bombings had rocked the country during the holy month of Ramadan.

On Wednesday, at least 10 persons were killed when three bombs placed on board separate minibuses exploded in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, a health official and police said.

"The bombs were placed on three minibuses in different districts of the city," Balkh provincial police spokesman Asif Waziri told *AFP*, adding that 15 other persons were wounded.

Najibullah Tawana, head of Balkh health department, said three women were among the 10 killed in the blasts on board the vehicles.

Another bomb exploded inside a mosque in the capital Kabul late on Wednesday, killing at least two persons and wounding 10 others, the Interior Ministry said.

Johnson presided over drunken parties: report

Inquiry brings out U.K. PM's photos

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson presided over a culture of lockdown-breaking parties that featured drunken fighting among staff, according to a long-awaited inquiry on Wednesday that prompted renewed calls for his resignation.

Mr. Johnson is among dozens of people in Downing Street who have received police fines for breaching COVID regulations since 2020 – making Number 10 the most penalised address in the entire country.

"I take full responsibility for everything that took place on my watch," he told MPs in response to the report by senior civil servant Sue Gray, insisting: "I am humbled and I have learned." But Mr. Johnson said he was absent from most of the events, and denied lying to Parliament.

Ms. Gray published photographs of Mr. Johnson toasting staff with wine, and recounted revelling that sometimes stretched into the early hours to music from a karaoke machine.

"Many of these events should not have been allowed to happen," Ms. Gray wrote, revealing that Downing Street security and cleaning staff were mocked when they tried to protest at the staff conduct.

Boris Johnson

"The senior leadership at the centre, both political and official, must bear responsibility for this culture," Ms. Gray added.

'Charges vindicated'

The report came out as a different photograph published by the *Daily Mirror* newspaper showed a Downing Street table laden with wine bottles and doughnuts.

The main Opposition Labour party said the "catalogue of criminality" revealed by the report vindicated its calls for Mr. Johnson to quit.

Beijing eyes deal with Pacific nations

The proposal covers everything from security to fisheries

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WELLINGTON

China wants 10 small Pacific nations to endorse a sweeping agreement covering everything from security to fisheries in what one leader warns is a "game-changing" bid by Beijing to wrest control of the region.

A draft of the agreement shows that China wants to train Pacific police officers, team up on "traditional and non-traditional security" and expand law enforcement cooperation.

China also wants to jointly develop a marine plan for fisheries – which would include the Pacific's lucrative tuna catch – increase cooperation on running the region's Internet networks, and set up cultural Confucius Institutes and classrooms. China also mentions the possibility of setting up a free trade area with the Pacific nations.

China's move comes as Foreign Minister Wang Yi begins a visit to the region.

Mr. Wang is visiting seven of the countries he hopes will endorse the "Common Development Vision" – the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Wang is also holding virtual meetings with the other three potential signatories – the Cook Islands, Niue and the Federated States of Micronesia.

But Micronesia's President David Panuelo has written an eight-page letter to the leaders of other Pacific nations saying his nation won't be endorsing the plan and warning of dire consequences if others do.

Xi defends China's human rights record

UN official takes stock of Xinjiang

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

Chinese leader Xi Jinping defended his country's record to the top UN human rights official on Wednesday, saying each nation should be allowed to find its own path.

Mr. Xi criticised countries that lecture others on human rights and allegedly politicise the issue.

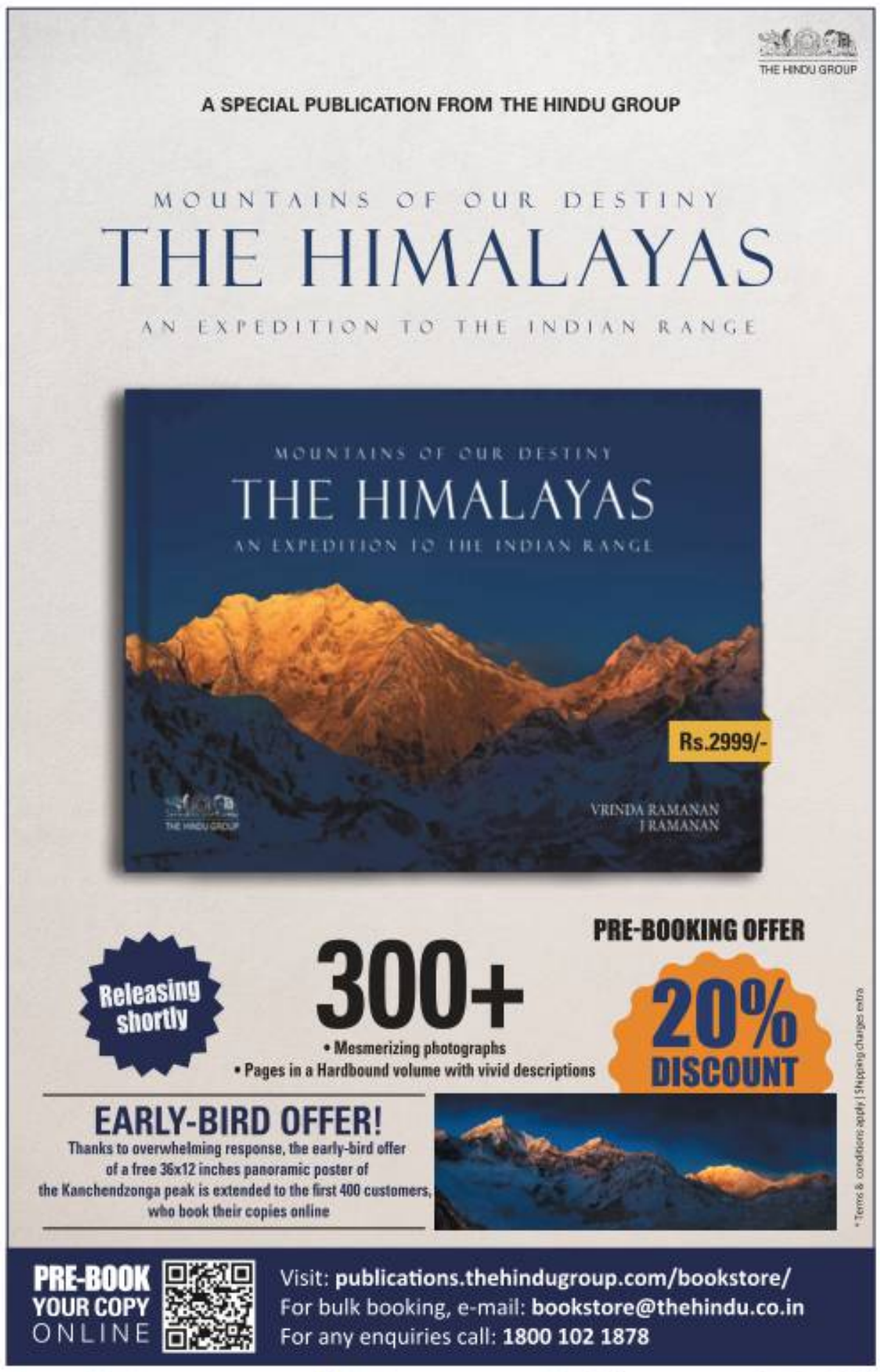
"Through long-term and persistent hard work, China has successfully embarked on a path of human rights development that conforms to the trend of the times and suits its own national conditions," Mr. Xi told UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet in a video call.

Ms. Bachelet is in the middle of a six-day visit to China that includes stops in Xinjiang, a remote northwestern region where the Chinese government has been accused genocide against Uighurs and other ethnic groups.

Marcos Jr. proclaimed President-elect

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MANILA

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was proclaimed the next President of the Philippines by a joint session of Congress on Wednesday following a landslide election triumph 36 years after his dictator father was ousted in a pro-democracy uprising. The Senate and House of Representatives also declared that his separately elected vice presidential running mate, Sara Duterte, had won by a wide margin. She is the daughter of outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte.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PM Ranil given Finance portfolio

He will present an interim Budget in six weeks and slash infrastructure projects

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on Wednesday assumed additional charge as Finance Minister, possibly the toughest job when the island nation's economy experiences a rapid decline amid an unprecedented crisis.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's office said Mr. Wickremesinghe was sworn in as "Minister of Finance, Economic Stabilisation, and National Policies", about a fortnight after Mr. Gotabaya appointed him Premier in place of his elder brother Mahinda Rajapaksa, amid a political tumult.

There were few takers for the role of Finance Minister, with former Minister Ali Sabry reportedly declining to accept the job, and economists in opposition refusing to take on the role unconditionally.

Mr. Wickremesinghe on Wednesday said he would present an interim Budget within six weeks and slash infrastructure projects to divert funds to a relief programme aimed at supporting the Sri Lankans worst-hit by the crisis. "With the interim Budget, it is just about cutting down expenditure, cutting to the bone where possible and transferring it to welfare," he told *Reuters* in an interview.

Ranil Wickremesinghe

'Difficult months ahead'

After taking charge as Prime Minister, Mr. Wickremesinghe had warned citizens of the "most difficult" next few months and "impending food shortages" – a consequence of Mr. Gotabaya's abrupt policy shift to organic farming in May 2021. His government reversed the policy following wide criticism and farmer protests, but experts have flagged a drastic drop, of up to 50%, in harvest this year.

The new Prime Minister's emphasis has so far been on tapping external help, including from the International Monetary Fund and bilateral partners. Colombo opted for a preemptive default on its foreign loans and is attempting to "restructure" its debt totalling $50 billion. While the government's negotiations with the IMF are yet to conclude, the World Bank on Tuesday ruled out any new assistance to Sri Lanka. "Until an adequate macroeconomic policy framework is in place, the World Bank does not plan to offer new financing to Sri Lanka," the Bank said in a statement, adding that it was working with the IMF and other development partners in "advising on appropriate policies to restore economic stability and broad-based growth."

In his address to the nation on March 16, Mr. Wickremesinghe outlined three main policy initiatives – a new Budget, a decision to privatise Sri Lanka's loss-making national carrier; and printing more money to pay state sector employees. Mr. Wickremesinghe has indicated that 1 trillion Sri Lankan rupees are about to be printed. As the new Finance Minister, he has the task of not only obtaining emergency assistance from different sources, but also resurrecting the island nation's domestic economy, by boosting production and exports, to generate revenue and foreign exchange.

Meanwhile, public protests continue across the island, including in front of the sea-facing Presidential Secretariat in Colombo and outside the residence of the PM. The demonstrators chant slogans asking President Gotabaya and Prime Minister Ranil to quit, as citizens face acute shortages of food items, fuel, medicines, and cooking gas. Inflation rose to another record high of 33.8% year-on-year in April, from 21.5% in March, government data showed.

MARKET WATCH

	25-05-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	53,749	-0.56
US Dollar	77.54	0.04
Gold	50,935	-0.18
Brent oil	113.44	0.15

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	707.90	-44.25
Apollo Hosp	3524.30	-107.35
Asian Paints	2838.05	-248.80
Axis Bank	665.00	0.95
Bajaj Auto	3791.80	8.50
Bajaj Finserv	12406.05	48.75
Bajaj Finance	5827.40	28.60
Bharti Airtel	688.20	10.00
BPCL	326.15	-3.95
Britannia Ind	3516.50	46.05
Cipla	971.85	1.45
Coal India	180.70	-1.65
Divis Lab	3519.35	-142.35
Dr Reddys Lab	4307.45	-39.65
Eicher Motors	2686.15	-33.15
Grasim Ind	1375.55	-27.20
HCL Tech	974.45	-17.30
HDFC	2237.45	30.65
HDFC Bank	1328.80	9.85
HDFC Life	569.10	16.20
Hero MotoCorp	2594.70	-42.30
Hindalco	396.85	-3.95
Hind Unilever	2298.70	-10.95
ICICI Bank	713.35	5.20
Indusind Bank	893.35	-4.60
Infosys	1410.45	-30.55
ITC	272.70	1.85
JSW Steel	528.45	-11.25
Kotak Bank	1907.55	24.95
L&T	1574.75	-51.55
M&M	928.40	-18.45
Maruti Suzuki	7787.25	-15.40
Nestle India Ltd.	17283.75	96.65
NTPC	152.65	5.75
ONGC	152.60	1.95
PowerGrid Corp	224.85	-2.15
Reliance Ind	2612.00	-3.85
SBI Life	1096.00	22.60
State Bank	454.10	-7.95
Shree Cement	21253.80	-393.60
Sun Pharma	911.20	1.30
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	716.20	1.05
Tata Motors	417.00	-8.75
Tata Steel	999.10	-7.25
TCS	3167.65	-120.35
Tech Mahindra	1060.15	-38.20
Titan	2113.40	-26.85
UltraTech Cement	5792.20	-75.85
UPL	764.00	-28.55
Wipro	444.85	-15.10

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 25

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	77.33	77.65
Euro	82.53	82.88
British Pound	96.69	97.13
Japanese Yen (100)	60.82	61.08
Chinese Yuan	11.59	11.64
Swiss Franc	80.24	80.58
Singapore Dollar	56.22	56.47
Canadian Dollar	60.22	60.47
Malaysian Ringitt	17.59	17.70
Australian Dollar	54.70	54.93

Source: Indian Bank

ABB to take control of EV platform Numocity

BENGALURU

ABB said its e-mobility division has agreed to acquire a controlling stake in Numocity, a digital platform for electric-vehicle charging.

'Cement is the next target in war against inflation'

Worries about potential inflationary impact likely to delay rationalisation of GST rate slabs, says senior official

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

The government has tasked a panel led by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba to examine an array of measures to ease cement prices amid supply constraints in parts of the country, including reviewing the possibility of using the sea route to transport cement from units in south India that have idle capacities.

While reining in cement prices is part of the Centre's push to tame high inflation, which includes the recent fuel tax cuts and recalibration of import and export duties on steel and plastic, the government is also keen to ensure there are no shortages of the key building material at a time when public infrastructure is being pushed to stoke growth, a senior government official said.

Shoring up availability: Panel exploring ways to move cement by sea from units in south India that have idle capacities. • AFP

Inflation is also the main reason that changes in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate structure, currently being deliberated upon by a group of ministers (GoM) under the GST Council, would likely have to be delayed given the potential inflationary impact that a rationalisation of the multiple tax rates could have.

"The GST Council members, be it the Centre or the States, are not unmindful of the desperate need for rationalising the rate slabs and structure but we just need to get the timing right," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "Even if the GoM submits its report, is the Council ready to deal with it when inflation is the top worry," the official wondered.

Any rejig of GST rates applicable on different products and services will entail some tax increases and some cuts. The GST Council has been aware of the need to rationalise rates since at least 2019, but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the need to support the recovery last year, had compelled a deferral of the exercise, the official noted.

While there are suspicions about some degree of cartelisation among cement players that is likely responsible for the constriction of supplies and higher prices, the Centre is exploring ways to tap the surplus production capacities that are currently idling in the southern parts of the country. The government is in talks with the South India Cement Manufacturers' Association to work out ways for members to meet the rising demand in other regions., the official noted.

'Logistical support'

"They don't need any fiscal sops, just logistical support to move cement out, so we are looking at provision of more railway rakes as an option to pricier road transport. Even the sea route is being considered – for instance, the key input for construction could be sent to Haldia port, from say Chennai port, and then moved onwards through inland waterways, with the last mile covered by road or rail," the official explained.

The relaxation in customs duties on key raw materials for plastics and the curbs on steel exports were aimed at easing the lot of micro, small and medium enterprises, which were severely affected by non-availability or high prices for these key inputs.

Stressing that India's inflation pressures were being driven by global factors such as high fuel and commodity prices as well as supply chain disruptions caused by the war in Ukraine and China's strict lockdowns to curb COVID-19 transmission, the official said this was also leading to a surge in global investor interest in India as they seek to diversify supply risks.

Cabinet clears Hindustan Zinc stake sale

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Cabinet on Wednesday approved the sale of the government's residual 29.5% stake in Hindustan Zinc, 20 years after the erstwhile PSU's management control had been transferred to the Vedanta group's subsidiary company Sterlite.

"The structure and process of the transaction will be worked out by a Committee of Secretaries which will then be taken up by a Ministerial group, the Alternative Mechanism (AM) empowered by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs," said a top government official. The timing of the sale will be decided upon by the AM, the official said, explaining that the Cabinet's nod was only an enabling starting point.

Sensex slips as IT stocks continue slide

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices fell for the third consecutive day on Wednesday, as technology counters continued to decline.

The S&P BSE Sensex fell 303.35 points, or 0.56%, to 53,749.26. Four of the six counters that slid the most were IT stocks. Asian Paints fell 8.04%, followed by TCS (3.69%), Tech Mahindra (3.53%), Wipro (3.3%) and Infosys (2.06%). The NSE Nifty50 slumped 0.62%, to 16,025.80 points.

"The primary focus in the coming weeks will be on the central banks' policy measures to stabilise inflation," said Arafat Saiyed, senior research analyst at Reliance Securities.

Sundaram Finance Q4 net jumps 43% to ₹299 cr.

Board recommends ₹10 final divided

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Non-banking finance company Sundaram Finance has registered a 43% rise in its standalone net profit for the fourth quarter ended March to ₹299 crore.

Revenue from operations contracted to ₹940 crore from ₹968 crore, while disbursements grew 13% to ₹3,751 crore. Adjusting for the pandemic induced ECLGS scheme, disbursements grew 16% over the year-earlier period, it said.

Assets under management contracted to ₹29,532 crore from ₹30,882 crore, due to COVID-led lockdown, while deposit base was up by ₹82 crore to ₹4,103 crore.

"Overall economic activity improved in FY22 after a difficult first quarter due to wave 2 of the pandemic, and demand remained robust across segments in the rest of the year," said Harsha Viji, executive vice chairman.

Harsha Viji

The board recommended a final divided of ₹10 per share, the NBFC said.

ICL, start-up Tvasta sign 3D printing pact

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The India Cements Ltd. (ICL) has forged a strategic collaboration with deep tech start-up Tvasta Manufacturing Solutions, which specialises in construction 3D printing.

The MoU was signed by ICL whole-time director Rupa Gurunath and Tvasta co-founder and COO Vidyashankar C.

The collaboration will see ICL and Tvasta engaging in dedicated R&D and synergetic exchange of technology-centric efforts to develop new raw-material formulations used in 3D printing applications and offering mutual strategic support for key projects, it said in a statement.

IndiGo Q4 loss widens as fuel costs surge, Omicron impacts

Airline posts ₹1,681 cr. loss after Q3's first profit in 7 quarters

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's largest domestic airline IndiGo reported fourth-quarter loss widened to ₹1,681 crore, from ₹1,147 crore a year earlier, on soaring fuel costs, the impact of COVID-19's Omicron wave and a weakening rupee.

The carrier had reported its first profit in seven quarters in the October-December period aided by a jump in passenger traffic.

IndiGo's full-year loss also widened to ₹6,161 crore, from ₹5,806 crore in the previous fiscal 12-month period.

The airline registered a 62.3% increase in passengers in FY22 compared with

the previous year. But fuel prices, which constitute almost 40% of an airline's operating cost, surged 71.6% in the period.

At the end of FY22, IndiGo had a total cash balance of ₹18,227 crore, including ₹7,763 crore of free cash. Total debt stood at ₹36,877 crore, including lease liabilities of ₹31,665 crore.

'Demand destruction'

"This quarter has been difficult because of the demand destruction caused by the Omicron virus in the first half," said CEO Ronojoy Dutta. "Although traffic rebounded and demand was robust during the latter half of the quarter, we were challenged by high fuel costs and a weakening rupee," Mr. Dutta added.

The airline was focussed on maintaining its cost leadership position as well as on building the most efficient network in the region, the CEO emphasised.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only through e-Procurement Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from registered Agencies for the following works:

Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM), 5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD	Last Date & Time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
1	(WWM) H	BWSSB/EE(WWM)H/PB/84/2022-23 Date: 24.05.2022	₹ 33.16 Lakhs ₹ 66,300/-	01.06.2022 upto 5:30 pm	03.06.2022 at 12:00 Noon

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (WWM)H**

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurment process can be obtained by logging on to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/BCPL/659/2022-23

COVID-19 - DON'T SPREAD RUMOURS, ACT RESPONSIBLY, AVOID INFECTION-NOT THE INFECTED.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Office of the Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture West Zone, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, 8th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru - 560 003.

No: SADH(W)/TENDER/PR/01/2022-23 **Dated: 25.05.2022**

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)

(Two Cover System) (Through **GOK e-Procurement Portal** only)

The Horticulture Superintendent (West), (Referred to as Employer in these documents) invites Tenders in accordance with KTPP rules 2000, from eligible and experienced Person/Agencies/Firms (Referred to as Tenderers in these documents) registered in Labour Department for Providing Security Services, Toilet Maintenance and Watering for Medians West Zone Parks.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works/Category	Estimated Amount (in ₹.)	EMD (in ₹.)
1	Providing Security Services to Park under Yashavanthapura Flyover & Ambedkar Statue in Ward No-45. (Others)	635000/-	15875/-
2	Providing Security Services to Parks in Govindarajanagara Constituency Ward No-104 (Others)	9934918/-	198698/-
3	Providing Security Services for Kanakabhavana Park in Ward No-128 (Others)	1270000/-	31750/-
4	Providing Security Services for Sangolli Rayanna Park in Ward No-126 (Others)	1270000/-	31750/-
5	Providing Cleaning and Maintenance Services to Toilets Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Stadium in Ward No-106 (Others)	2235000/-	55875/-
6	Providing Security Services to Parks in Malleshwaram Constituency Ward No-65 (2nd Call) (Others)	6341000/-	158525/-
7	Providing Security Services to Parks in Gandhinagara Constituency Ward No-94 (2nd Call) (Others)	6130000/-	153250/-
8	Water Supply to Parks and Median Through Tankers to Mahalakshmi-puram Constituency Ward No-68 (3rd Call) (Others)	1486000/-	37150/-

Calendar of Events: **(1)** Date of Notification is **25.05.2022.** **(2)** Tender can be downloaded from **04.06.2022.** **(3)** Tender Closing date **10.06.2022** **(4)** Technical Bid Opening Date: **13.06.2022 (11 AM onwards)** **(5)** Financial Bid Opening Date: **20.06.2022 (If Possible).** Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours on working days or from website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/- Senior Assistant Director (Horticulture-West)

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

IN THE COURT OF LX ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BANGALORE (CCH-61)

P & S.C. No. 514 of 2021

Between:

Smt.Tulasi Bai,
Wife of late Kandoba Rao Sindhe,
Aged about 84 years,
residing at: No.3, 6th Cross, Ramesh Nagar,
Bangalore-37 ..PETITIONER

And:

1. Sri. Sunil Sindhe, Son of Govinda Rao Sindhe, Aged about 48 years
2. Sri. Smitha Sindhe, Daughter of Govinda Rao Sindhe, Aged about 46 years
No.1 and 2 are Residing at No.73/D, 1st Cross, 3rd Main, Mathikere, Bangalore-560054 ..RESPONDENTS

PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS the above named petitioner has made a petition to this court (CCH-61) Under section 372 of The Indian Succession Act, 1925, pray for succession certificate in respect of the movable property as mentioned below schedule, which left by their daughter in law viz., late Saroja Sinde alias Saroja Bai, who expired on 21-04-2021

Interested person are hereby informed to appear in this court in person or by a pleader duly instructed **on 29-06-2022 at 11' o clock** in forenoon to show cause against the petitioner, failing which the matter will be heard and determined exparte.

SCHEDULE OF MOVABLES

Item No.1: SB A/c No.520291015910976, Union/Corporation Bank , No.24, 3rd Main 4th Cross, Chamrajpet, Bangalore-560018
Item No.2: SB A/c No.814104029, Indian Bank, No.166, 5th Main Road, Chamrajpet, Bangalore-560018
Item No.3: SB A/c No.103745133S4 State Bank of India, No.119-136, JP Arcade/ Sri Shakti Arekade, 5th Main Road Chamrajpet, Bangalore-560018
Item No.4: SB A/c No.042112010079195, Syndicate Bank /Canara Bank No.72, 5th Main Road, sir Puttannachetty Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-560 018
Item No.5: SB A/c No.896216 (2846094885), The Post Master (postal banking) 4th Cross, 5th Main Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-560 018

Given under my hand and seal of the court this the 25th Day of April 2022.

By Order of the Court,
Sd/- Assistant Registrar,
City Civil Court, Bangalore

Name & Address of the Advocate for Petitioners:
A.VIJIKUMAR
M/s.Next Gen Legal services
No.154/13, 3rd floor, 1st Cross, 5th Main, Shankara Mutt Main Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-560018.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client has negotiated for purchase of Schedule item No.1 property site bearing Number 267, Khanesumari No.108/267 from its owner **Smt. S.C. Poornima** Daughter of K.S. Channabasappa and wife of Dayashankar.N.B. Schedule item No.2 property site bearing Number 266, Khanesumari No.108/266 from its owner **Smt. N.S. Chandrakala** Daughter of Shivashankar and wife of Shadakshari.N.B for valuable sale consideration.

Any Person/s, firm/s, institution/s, Banks, etc., claiming to have any right, title and interest over the Schedule properties or having any claims/objections of whatsoever nature, to the proposed sale of Schedule properties in favor of our client, are required to lodge/intimate their claims/objections with documentary evidence in support thereof to the undersigned **within 7 days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which our client shall proceed with the purchase of Schedule properties without any reference to any such claim and the same if any shall be considered as waived and/or abandoned.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY:

Item No.1: All that piece and parcel of **site bearing Number 266, Khanesumari No.108/266, layout known as "Ramki Layout" formed in converted Sy.No.55/2, situated at, Vajarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, measuring East and West 61 feet and North to South 44 feet, totally measuring 2684 square feet** bounded on:
East by : Road,
West by : Site Number 108/260, 108/261,
North by : Site Number 108/265,
South by : Site Number 108/267.

Item No.2: All that piece and parcel of **site bearing Number 267, Khanesumari No.108/267, layout known as "Ramki Layout" formed in converted Sy.No.55/2, situated at, Vajarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, measuring East and West 61 feet and North to South 44+52/2 feet, totally measuring 2928 square feet** bounded on:
East by : Road,
West by : Site Number 108/259, 108/260,
North by : Site Number 108/266,
South by : Road

Sd/-
Mr. Shanmukha. M.S,
Advocate & Legal consultant,
No.201, 2nd Floor, Brigade Links, 1st Main Road, Sheshadripuram, Bengaluru – 560 020. Mob: 9448615560

'Chip, supply issues cost BEL ₹2,200 cr.'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Bharat Electronics Ltd. lost business to the tune of ₹2,200 crore during fiscal 2021-22 following chip shortages and disruptions in the global supply chain, a top official said.

Addressing the media here on Wednesday, BEL CMD Anandi Ramalingam said the company would have recorded an additional turnover of ₹2,200 crore had the supply-side environment been better in the March-ended fiscal.

"We expected a growth of 10-15% but due to a global chip shortage, pandemic and the geopolitical situation affecting logistics, we lost some business that would have otherwise come to us as additional turnover," she elaborated

BEL turnover grew 9% to ₹15,044 crore in FY22.

India's palm oil imports said to hit 11-year low

Soyoil imports may jump 57%: dealers

REUTERS
MUMBAI

India's palm oil imports could drop by almost a fifth as cheaper soyoil takes more market share, following Indonesia's curbs on palm oil exports and New Delhi allowing duty-free imports of soyoil, dealers said.

Palm oil imports by the world's biggest vegetable-oil importer in its marketing year ending on October 31 will fall 19% to 6.7 million tonnes, the lowest since 2010/11, according to the average forecast from dealers.

Soyoil imports could jump 57% to a record 4.5 million tonnes, they said. That could put pressure on Malaysian palm oil prices and may lift soyoil imports to record highs and support U.S. soyoil futures prices.

India on Tuesday allowed duty-free imports of two

million tonnes each of soyoil and sunflower oil for the current and next fiscal years ending March 31, as part of efforts to keep a lid on local edible-oil prices.

"The duty structure has made buying soyoil more attractive than palm oil," said Sandeep Bajoria, CEO of Sunvin Group, a vegetable oil brokerage.

India will import 1.9 million tonnes of sunflower oil in the current year, unchanged from a year earlier, dealers estimate.

BPCL Q4 net slides 82% on price freeze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) on Wednesday reported an 82% decline in net profit to ₹2,130.53 crore for the Jan.–March quarter as the firm held retail prices of fuel despite a rise in cost.

Revenue from operations rose 25% to ₹1.23 lakh crore on higher oil prices but losses on petrol, diesel and domestic LPG sales dented the financials.

BPCL and other public sector oil firms held petrol and diesel prices for a record duration despite a surge in the cost of crude oil to a 14-year high. Oil marketing firms began raising fuel prices from March 22 but ceased within 16 days. For FY22, BPCL's net profit dropped to ₹9,076.50 crore from ₹19,110.06 crore.

Hinduja group to redevelop heritage palace in India for more than £700 mn

Group to announce heritage properties for £700 mn - 1 bn each in London, India

FORUM GANDHI
MUMBAI

After successfully redeveloping the iconic Old War Office (OWO) building in the U.K., the Hinduja Group is set to undertake similar projects in India and other parts of the world. Gopichand P. Hinduja, Co-Chairman of the Hinduja Group told *Business Line* that two more heritage properties for £700 million to £1 billion each in London and India, respectively, would be announced over the next 2-3 months time.

"The first announcement that you will hear next week is from London," Mr. Hinduja said. "It's a very unique one. More unique than the one we are working on

Gopichand P. Hinduja

(OWO). The property in India will take 2-3 months," he added.

"Those are all historical properties, we don't want to go into anything modern, we prefer historical and heritage. We want to leave a legacy behind. There is no project, which we are negotiating, that is less than 700 million to a billion pounds," he observed.

The Hinduja group has created a new business vertical to undertake similar development projects in different parts of the world. "We have the team, we have the experience, we know the processes and have the confidence of financial institutions to undertake such projects," Mr. Hinduja said.

Luxury hotel, residences

Eight years after acquiring the U.K.'s iconic OWO building, which was once occupied by the country's wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the Hinduja Group is set to unveil it this year around Deepavali. The OWO has now been redeveloped into a 120-room luxury hotel and 85 branded residences.

Situated at one of London's most historically important addresses, the OWO, originally completed in 1906 and designed by British architect William Young, is steeped in history. Formerly the site of the original Palace of Whitehall, home to Henry VIII and other monarchs, the building has witnessed world-shaping events while influential political and military leaders including Winston Churchill and David Lloyd George held office.

Patidar hurricane blows away Super Giants in the Eliminator

The No. 3 batter smashes an unbeaten hundred to power Royal Challengers to 207 before the bowlers restrict Lucknow to 193; Rahul's knock goes in vain

IPL 2022

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Rajat Patidar's audacious stroke-play propelled Royal Challengers Bangalore to a 14-run win over debutant Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL Eliminator at the Eden Gardens here on Wednesday.

Patidar's maiden T20 hundred (112 n.o., 54b, 12x4, 7x6) enabled Royal Challengers post a massive 207 for four and restrict Super Giants to 193 for six.

After bad weather delayed the toss by 55 minutes and the match by 40 minutes, Super Giants captain K.L. Rahul asked Royal Challengers to bat.

Left-arm seamer Mohsin Khan made an immediate impact, finding the edge of Royal Challengers captain Faf du Plessis. Mohsin worked up pace, bowled a good line and generated bounce to pose problems for the batters.

Even as Virat Kohli (25, 24b, 2x4) looked to consolidate, Patidar started playing the big shots and took the aerial route quite often. He went after Krunal Pandya in the sixth over, helping Royal Challengers reach 52 in the PowerPlay.

Kohli fell in the ninth over, his upper cut off Avesh Khan landing in third man's hands and bringing to an end the 66-run stand with Patidar.

Though Glenn Maxwell and Mahipal Lomror departed without making a sizeable contribution, Patidar continued the assault. The No. 3 batter's sequence off a Ravi Bishnoi over read: 6, 4, 6, 4 and 6. He got his runs in the region between mid-wicket and long-off as 27 came off the 16th over. To add insult to injury, Bishnoi saw Deepak Hooda drop Patidar on 76 on the mid-wicket boundary.

The 28-year-old Patidar, who was again let off on 93, pulled Mohsin for a massive six to reach his century. He added 92 in 41 balls with Dinesh Karthik (37 n.o., 23b, 5x4, 1x6), who dazzled with yet another cameo. Some sloppy fielding let Super Giants down in the final overs. In reply, Super Giants lost two wickets inside five overs. But skipper K.L. Rahul blasted Mohammed Siraj for two sixes and a four in the sixth over to take his side to 62 in the PowerPlay.

Rahul (79, 58b, 3x4, 5x6) and Hooda (45, 26b, 1x4, 4x6) threatened to pull it off when Hasaranga castled Hooda after being hit for two sixes. Josh Hazlewood removed Rahul and Krunal Pandya in the 19th over and 24 off the final over proved too much for Super Giants.

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS
Virat Kohli c Mohsin b Avesh 25 *(24b, 2x4)*, Faf du Plessis c de Kock b Mohsin 0 *(1b)*, Rajat Patidar (not out) 112 *(54b, 12x4, 7x6)*, Glenn Maxwell c Lewis b Krunal 9 *(10b, 1x6)*, Mahipal Lomror c Rahul b Bishnoi 14 *(9b, 2x4)*, Dinesh Karthik (not out) 37 *(23b, 5x4, 1x6)*; Extras (w-9, nb-1): 10; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 207.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-4 (du Plessis, 0.5 ov), 2-70 (Kohli, 8.3), 3-86 (Maxwell, 10.3), 4-115 (Lomror, 13.1).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Mohsin 4-0-25-1, Chameera 4-0-54-0, Krunal 4-0-39-1, Avesh 4-0-44-1, Bishnoi 4-0-45-1.

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Quinton de Kock c du Plessis b Siraj 6 *(5b, 1x6)*, K.L. Rahul c Shahbaz b Hazlewood 79 *(58b, 3x4, 5x6)*, Manan Vohra c Shahbaz b Hazlewood 19 *(11b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Deepak Hooda b Hasaranga 45 *(26b, 1x4, 4x6)*, Marcus Stoinis c Patidar b Harshal 9 *(9b, 1x6)*, Evin Lewis (not out) 2 *(6b)*, Krunal Pandya c & b Hazlewood 0 *(1b)*, Dushmantha Chameera (not out) 11 *(4b, 1x4, 1x6)*; Extras (b-5, lb-2, w-15): 22; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 193.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-8 (de Kock, 0.6), 2-41 (Vohra, 4.3), 3-137 (Hooda, 14.4), 4-173 (Stoinis, 17.3), 5-180 (Rahul, 18.4), 6-180 (Krunal, 18.5).

RCB BOWLING
Siraj 4-0-41-1, Hazlewood 4-0-43-3, Shahbaz 4-0-35-0, Hasaranga 4-0-42-1, Harshal 4-0-25-1.

Toss: LSG; **MoM:** Patidar.
RCB won by 14 runs.

Qualifier 2: May 27: RR vs RCB, Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

Whirlwind: Patidar did as he pleased, smashing a dozen fours and seven sixes in his 54-ball unbeaten 112. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

Captain Hardik has made a mark and how!

Titans' leader has carried the additional responsibility with aplomb

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

Hardik Pandya, in his first official media interaction as Gujarat Titans captain on February 1, had preferred to keep his bowling fitness for the IPL "a surprise".

However, more than Hardik the bowler or the middle-order batter, it is Hardik the captain that has emerged as one of the biggest surprises of IPL 2022.

Leading a major team for the first time, Hardik's captaincy has been pivotal in helping the Titans mark its maiden IPL campaign by finishing at the top of the table in the league phase and booking a berth in the final at Ahmedabad on May 29 with a clinical win over Rajasthan Royals in Qualifier 1 on Tuesday.

So what has worked for Hardik the captain? He appears to have ticked all the boxes that make an individual an ideal captain for a cricket team.

Hardik – along with a solid support staff in head coach Ashish Nehra, assistant coach Gary Kirsten and director of cricket Vikram Solanki – deserves credit in creating an ensemble that relied on multiple match-winners.

Instead of getting pulled down by leadership pressure, Hardik has carried the additional responsibility with aplomb.

Not only did he open the bowling on numerous occasions, he also created a new role for himself with the willow at No. 3 or 4. The manner in which he has embraced the new role seems to have rubbed off on his teammates.

Besides, Hardik's field awareness and bowling changes have been on the mark. In the contest against Kolkata Knight Riders on April 23, he asked the pacers to use the short-ball ploy while defending a total of 156 as Titans won by eight runs.

Hardik, the skipper and player, has grown in confidence as IPL-15 has progressed. The win over Royals on Tuesday, when he combined with Miller to pull off a remarkable chase of 189, was proof of that.

Influencer: Skipper Hardik has been on the ball for Titans in this edition of the IPL. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

Pragg-Ding final deadlocked

The Indian teenager had ousted Anish in the semifinal

CHESS

SPORTS BUREAU

R. Praggnanandhaa hit back in the second game to make it 1-1 against World No. 2 Ding Liren at the halfway stage of the first set of four rapid games in the final of the Chessable Masters online rapid chess tournament on Wednesday.

Praggnanandhaa's two extra-pawns in the endgame proved too much for the strongest Chinese in the world. After some spirited defence, Ding Liren gave up from the white side after 58 moves.

In the first game, Praggnanandhaa battled a lost cause, sacrificed a knight, but eventually resigned in 42 moves against Ding Liren who stayed in total control.

Late on Tuesday, the young Indian stunned Anish Giri 1.5-0.5 in the blitz tiebreaker after the players were locked 2-2 after the four rapid games. The triumph made Praggnanandhaa the first Indian to reach the title-clash of an event on the Champions Chess Tour.

The results (semifinals):
R. Praggnanandhaa bt Anish Giri (Ned) 2-2 (1.5-0.5 in blitz tiebreaker); Ding Liren (Chn) bt Magnus Carlsen (Nor) 2.5-1.5.

The right moves: Praggnanandhaa continues to gain the respect of the chess elite with his exploits. • FILE PHOTO: R. RAGU

Sreeshankar wins gold in Greece

Sreeshankar. • FILE PHOTO

SPORTS BUREAU

M. Sreeshankar, the National long jump record holder, surprised Indoor Worlds silver medallist Thobias Montler and won the gold with 8.31m at the International jumping meet in Kallithea, Athens, on Wednesday.

Sreeshankar, who has a personal best of 8.36m, took the title with his third jump after 7.88 and 7.71 in his first two attempts. His fourth was 7.79 while the next two were fouls.

It was Sreeshankar's first overseas competition after the Tokyo Olympics.

Sweden's Montler took the silver with 8.27 and France's Jules Pommery the bronze with 8.17m.

Alcaraz survives an epic against Ramos-Vinolas

Zverev claws his way back to beat Baez; Muchova sends Sakkari packing; Djokovic, Kerber through

FRENCH OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Teenage sensation Carlos Alcaraz saved a match point and came back from 3-0 down in the final set to defeat Spanish compatriot Albert Ramos-Vinolas and make the third round at Roland-Garros on Wednesday.

The 19-year-old sixth seed, widely tipped to break the Grand Slam stranglehold of Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal, triumphed 6-1, 6-7(7), 5-7, 7-6(2), 6-4 in a four-hour 34-minute epic.

Alcaraz, bidding to become only the eighth teenager to win a Grand Slam men's title, hit a matching 74 winners and 74 unforced errors on Court Simonne-Mathieu.

The 34-year-old Ramos-Vinolas, ranked 44 and who made the quarterfinals in 2017, saved 23 of 31 break points before the flamboyant Alcaraz called on his deepest reserves and spectacular shot-making ability to win.

Former Grand Slam champions Angelique Kerber and Victoria Azarenka also advanced to the third round.

Kerber, who won her first clay title in six years on the eve of the French Open, defeated French wildcard and 2020 junior champion Elsa Jacquemot 6-1, 7-6(2) as she seeks the only Grand Slam missing from her collection.

The German 21st seed next plays Aliaksandra Sasnovich, the Belarusian who knocked out US Open champion Emma Raducanu 3-6, 6-1, 6-1.

"I think the last week was really important for me to get the title," former No. 1 Kerber said of her Strasbourg triumph.

"I had a lot of confidence. It's great to be back here and I hope I can still play a few more matches.

"When you achieve everything you want, you play for the love of the game. I just love the sport. Let's see how long I can keep playing at a high level."

Azarenka beat Andrea Petkovic 6-1, 7-6(3). She meets Swiss 23rd seed Jil Teichmann for a place in the fourth round.

Greek fourth seed Maria Sakkari crashed out, going down 7-6(5), 7-6(4) to Czech World No. 81 Karolina Muchova.

Sakkari, a 2021 Roland Garros semifinalist, is the fifth women's top-10 seed to lose in the first four days at Roland Garros.

"It's very special, she's an amazing player. It was a big fight, a little bit of a test and challenge for me and I'm happy I took it the way I did," said Muchova.

Top seed Djokovic saw off Slovakia's Alex Molcan, who is coached by Marian Vajda, the man who inspired most of his 20 Slam titles, 6-2, 6-3, 7-6(4).

Djokovic fired 10 aces and 40 winners past his 38th-ranked opponent and will next face Slovenia's Aljaz Bedene for a place in the last 16.

Alexander Zverev saved a match point against Argentina's Sebastian Baez as he battled back from two sets down to advance. Zverev overcame Baez 2-6, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2, 7-5 after three hours and 36 minutes.

Big fight: Muchova, the World No. 81, seeded stunned Greek fourth seed Sakkari in straight sets. • AFP

IMPORTANT RESULTS

Second round
Men: 1-Djokovic (Srb) bt Molcan (Svk) 6-2, 6-3, 7-6(4); Bedene (Slo) bt Cuevas (Uru) 4-6, 6-4, 7-6(5), 6-4; 9-Auger-Aliassime (Can) bt Carabelli (Arg) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4; 23-Isner (USA) bt Barrere (Fra) 6-4, 6-4, 3-6, 7-6(5); Miralles (Esp) bt 13-Fritz (USA) 3-6, 6-2, 6-2, 6-3; 10-Norrie (GBR) bt Kubler (Aus) 6-3, 6-4, 6-3; 21-Khachanov bt Dellien (Bol) 4-6, 6-4, 7-6(1), 6-3; 3-Zverev (Ger) bt Baez (Arg) 2-6, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2, 7-5; 15-Schwartzman (Arg) bt Munar (Esp) 2-6, 6-7(3), 6-2, 6-2, 6-2; 26-Zandschulp (Ned) bt Fognini (Ita) 6-4, 7-6(2), 3-2, retd.; 18-Dimitrov (Bul) bt Coric (Cro) 6-0, 6-4, 6-3; 6-Alcaraz (Esp) bt Ramos-Vinolas (Esp) 6-1, 6-7 (7), 5-7, 7-6(2), 6-4.
Women: 21-Kerber (Ger) bt Jacquemot (Fra) 6-1, 7-6(2); Sasnovich bt 12-Raducanu (GBR) 3-6, 6-1, 6-1; 27-Anisimova (USA) bt Vekic (Cro) 6-4, 6-1; Muchova (Cze) bt 4-Sakkari (Gre) 7-6(5), 7-6(4); 31-Mertens (Bel) w.o. Bouzkova (withdrew after testing COVID-19 positive); 18-Gauff (USA) bt Van Uytvanck (Bel) 6-1, 7-6(4); Azarenka bt Petkovic (Ger) 6-1, 7-6(3); 17-Fernandez (Can) bt Siniakova (Cze) 6-3, 6-2; Stephens bt 26-Cirstea (Rou) 3-6, 6-2, 6-0; 14-Bencic (Sui) bt Andreescu (Can) 6-2, 6-4.
First round: Men's doubles: Ramkumar (Ind) & Reese (USA) bt Otte & Altmaier (Ger) 7-6(4), 6-3.
Tuesday's result: Men: 4-Tsitsipas (Gre) bt Musetti (Ita) 5-7, 4-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-2.

Fallen seeds
- *Men:* 13-Fritz
- *Women:* 4-Sakkari, 12-Raducanu, 26-Cirstea

Day in numbers

3 Third time in his career Tsitsipas has won after losing the first two sets. Previous: Munar (2020 French Open), Nadal (2021 Aus Open)

4 Muchova has won all four of her matches against a top-3 opponent (Sakkari 2022, Osaka 2021, Barty 2021, Pliskova 2019)

7 Wednesday was three-time Major champion Kerber's seventh straight win on European red clay, the longest streak of her career on the surface

13 Raducanu has lost 13 of the 23 matches she has played since winning the 2021 US Open

23 The number of aces Isner hit during his four-set victory over Barrere

THURSDAY'S PICKS

MEN	WOMEN
2-Medvedev vs. Djere	1-Swiatek vs. Riske
4-Tsitsipas vs. Kolar	3-Badosa vs. Juvan
7-Rublev vs. Delbonis	13-Ostapenko vs. Cornet (N)
11-Sinner vs. Carballes Baena	19-Halep vs. Zheng

Delhi HC forms CoA for Hockey India

Batra decides against IOA re-election

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

The journey of Narinder Batra as an Indian sports administrator came a full circle on Wednesday with his announcement that he would not seek a re-election as IOA president and concentrate on his role with the FIH.

While the announcement came as a surprise, it quickly became apparent that there was more than one reason for it. Moments before, the Delhi High Court had formed a three-member committee to administer the affairs of Hockey India (HI) as the sport finds itself yet again, more than 12 years and innumerable developments both on and off the field later, without a federation.

The bench of Justice Najmi Waziri and Justice Swarankanta Sharma also set aside the election of the Executive Committee, did away with the posts of Life Member/ President for being in contravention of the National Sports Development Code and sought enquiry into all appointments made/ accrued as a result.

While the terms of power and responsibility for the CoA – comprising Justice (Retd.) Anil Dave, former CEC S.Y. Quraishi and Zafar Iqbal – are similar to that of the one formed for the AIFF last week, it has also been asked to look into the continuance of appointment of Elena Norman as CEO and curtailing CEO's powers to that of an employee.

The court also ordered the CoA to determine and recover any expenditure on such posts from HI and Batra.

Narinder Batra. • FILE PHOTO

The decision came in a case filed by former India star Aslam Sher Khan in 2020 challenging the posts of Life Members and CEO as illegal. But the repercussions may be felt far and wide with the whole business of 'Life Members' across sports now in question.

In a way, it is also the culmination of journeys of both the protagonists of the entire affair. Batra had raised the banner of protest against Late K.P.S. Gill that led to the formation of HI in the first place in 2009 with Aslam as the first chairman of the interim ad-hoc body.

Batra had become IOA president in 2017 after being the president of HI till 2016 but re-elections due in December 2021 had been postponed.

It's early days yet but his continuation as FIH president, however, will also be in the spotlight now given that he was nominated as India representative but the HI executive committee has now been deemed illegal.

I owed it to the game: Sher Khan

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

In 1975, Aslam Sher Khan came on as a substitute and became the hero no one expected in the World Cup semifinal against Malaysia. On Wednesday, the outspoken former full-back scored another goal for the sport with the Delhi High Court deciding in his favour against Hockey India.

"Jo kuch ho raha tha, ye bhi to ek karz tha hum par hockey ka jo aaj humne utara hai (The way things were, this was also a debt I owed to the game)", Khan told *The Hindu* after the verdict.

Currently in Bhopal, Khan admitted he filed the case after a lot of thought. "There were many who wanted things to change but no one dared to be openly defiant. I finally stepped in when it became too much. Scored then as a substitute, scored now. Others may back off but I owed Batra nothing to be scared," a satisfied Khan said.

LIVE TELECAST

NBA: Sports 18, Voot Select, Vh1, MTV & Jio TV, 6 a.m.
Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka: 2nd Test, day 4, FanCode, 9 a.m.
Roland Garros: Sony Ten 2 & 3 (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 1.30 p.m. onwards
Women's T20 Challenge: Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Doncic helps Mavericks keep series alive

DALLAS

Luka Doncic scored 30 points as Dallas Mavericks defeated the Golden State Warriors 119-109 at home to keep its NBA Western Conference finals series alive on Tuesday.
The results: Golden State 109 lost to Dallas 119. *Golden State leads 3-1.*

Barcelona survives All Stars' scare

SYDNEY

Teenage striker Ansu Fati got a late winner as Barcelona survived a scare to beat Dwight Yorke's A-League All Stars in a 3-2 thriller in front of 70,000 fans in Sydney on Wednesday. AFP

Arsenal's Elneny signs new contract

LONDON

Arsenal midfielder Mohamed Elneny has signed a new contract with the Premier League club. The Egypt international has scored five goals in 147 appearances since arriving at the Emirates from Swiss club Basel in 2016. The length of the 29-year-old's new deal has not been disclosed by the Gunners. AFP

Pavan and Shirin win Group I 1500m titles

BELAGAVI

Pavan Dhananjaya and Shirin emerged the Group I 1500m freestyle boys' and girls' champions respectively at the State sub-junior and junior swimming championships.
The results (winners all): Boys: 1500m freestyle: Group I: Pavan Dhananjaya (16:50.59s); **Group II:** S. Dhakshan (17:42.88); **Girls: 1500m freestyle: Group I:** Shirin (18:21.90); **Group II:** Meenakshi Menon (18:57.27).

Saleh holds Abhijeet

SHARJAH MASTERS

SPORTS BUREAU

Abhijeet Gupta's four-win sequence ended with a 26-move draw with UAE's Salem Saleh in the fifth round of the Sharjah Masters chess tournament in Sharjah, on Wednesday.

The result saw Abhijeet (4.5 points) keep his half-a-point after the second board encounter involving sixth seeded Romanian Bogdan Daniel Deac and Turkey's Mustafa Yilmaz (4 each) ended in a draw.

Aryan Chopra, Aravindh Chithambaram and Aditya Mittal were the only Indians to win while all three all-India encounters ended in draws.

The results (involving Indians): Fifth round: Salem Saleh (UAE, 4) drew with Abhijeet Gupta (4.5); Ranuak Sadhwani (3) drew with Arjun Erigaisi (3); S. L. Narayanan (3) drew with B. Adhiban (2.5); D. Gukesh (3) drew with S. P. Sethuraman (2.5); Surya Shekhar Ganguly (2.5) lost to Hans Moke Neimann (USA, 3.5); Abhimanyu Puranik (3) drew with Jules Moussard (Fra, 3); Aryan Chopra (3) bt Olga Badelka (FIDE, 2); Nataliya Buksa (Ukr, 2) lost to Aravindh Chithambaram (3); Ilyas Msellek (Mar, 2) drew with Nihal Sarin (2); Sankalp Gupta (2) drew with Mert Erdogdu (Tur, 2); Aditya Mittal (2.5) bt Meruert Kamalidenova (Kaz, 1.5).

Nilima Jogalekar goes down memory lane

The former India player, who is a match referee now, recalls the country's first women's National tournament in 1973

CRICKET

P. K. AJITH KUMAR
PUNE

A smile flashes across Nilima Jogalekar's face as she recalls that cricket match from half-a-century ago. "I received my first prize for cricket in that game, you know," she says. "A Glucose biscuit from the umpire; I got it for scoring a boundary, from the only shot I had at that time: the swing to the leg-side."

She was just 12 then. She was so small, she was nearly dwarfed by her pads. It was no ordinary match, that one. It was the first match in India's first National tournament. It was held at the Nehru Stadium here in the summer of 1973.

Nilima cannot help but recall that tournament these days because women's cricket is back in the city after a long gap in the form of the Women's T20 Challenge, which is in progress at the MCA Stadium.

Nilima Jogalekar. • FILE PHOTO

"When I played in that tournament, I never could have imagined that women's cricket would go on to become so popular in the country," says Nilima, who has played five Tests and 20 ODIs. "There was hardly any support for the game, from the families even.

Pioneers: The Maharashtra team that played in India's first National women's cricket tournament at Pune in 1973. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"On a tour of New Zealand for the 1982 Women's World Cup, I had seen Richard Hadlee dropping his wife Karen at the ground for a match against the Indian team. I wished female cricketers in India too got such encouragement."

Neelima, who is a match referee now, is happy to note that the girls are getting all the support they need now.

"In our time women's cricket survived because of a few people like Mahendra Kumar Sharma (who formed the Women's Cricket Association of India) and Aloo Bamjee," she says. "The girls from Aloo's club in Mumbai, Albee, had come to play here."Among them were the Edulji sisters, Diana and Behroze.

"One of the highlights of the tournament was the way Behroze entertained the crowd by imitating the late England captain Tony Greig," recalls Nilima. "Diana was of course a dreaded bowler then. Albees had a lot of good players. Sunil Gavaskar's sister Nutan also used to play for the club."

Fine performances

Nilima says there were some fine performances in the first National tournament, which was contested by three teams, Maharashtra, Mumbai and Uttar Pradesh.

"I remember some good innings from Shobha Pandit, Ujjwala Nikam and Kalpana Paropkari," she says. "Among the bowlers, Diana and Behroze stood out."

Nilima had to play for Uttar Pradesh because the team was short of players. Five decades later, she wishes there were more than three teams at the T20 Challenge so that more uncapped Indians could play.

Uttar Pradesh in semifinals

HOCKEY

SPORTS BUREAU

Uttar Pradesh scripted a 6-1 win over Karnataka in the quarterfinals of the 12th Hockey India-National junior men's championship at Kovilpatti on Wednesday.

Thursday is a rest day.

The results (Quarterfinals):

UP 6 (Rajan Gupta, Sharda Nanda Tiwari 2, Sourabh Anand Khushwaha 2, Amir Ali) bt Karnataka 1 (G. Vishwas).

Chandigarh 4 (Inderpal Singh 3, Harpanthpreet Singh) bt Jharkhand 2 (Atish Dodrai, Abishek Guria).

Haryana 13 (Rajat 2, Ankit, Shubham 3, Vikas, Tanuj Saroha 2, Toshant, Deepak 2, Gurnoor Grewal) bt Arunachal 1 (Navjot).

Odisha 3 (Akash Soranj, Sumit Kindo, Dabuka Purti) bt Punjab 1 (Bharat Thakur).

Anirudh & Vijay crash out

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU

Anirudh Chandrasekar and Vijay Sundar Prashanth went down fighting [10-7] in the super tie-break to the third seeds Alex Lawson and Luca Margaroli in the doubles first round of the €45,730 Challenger tennis tournament in Troisdorf, Germany, on Wednesday.

The results: €45,730 Challenger, Troisdorf, Germany: First round: Alex Lawson (USA) & Luca Margaroli (Sui) bt Anirudh Chandrasekar & Vijay Sundar Prashanth 7-6(5), 3-6, [10-7].

$25,000 ITF men, Mataro, Spain: First round: Pol Martin Tiffon (Esp) bt Manish Sureshkumar 6-3, 7-5.

$25,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: First round: Yu Hsiou Hssu (Tpe) & Fajing Sun (Chn) bt Wissam Abderrahman (Tun) & Karunuday Singh 6-1, 6-1; Gao Xin & Li Zhe bt Egor Tsarapkin & Shiva Swaroop 6-3, 6-0.

$15,000 ITF men, Ulcinj, Montenegro: First round: Samuel Vincent Ruggeri (Ita) bt Niki Poonacha 6-3, 6-2.

$15,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: First round: Abhinav Sanjeev Shanmugam bt Jayden Court (Aus) 6-1, 3-6, 6-2; Adil Kalyanpur bt Walid Ahouda (Mar) 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

Women: Helena Narmont (Est) & Kaaviya Balasubramanian bt Katie Dyson (Ger) & Elina Zakharova 6-4, 3-6, [10-6].

$15,000 ITF men, Oran, Algeria: Second round: Digvijay Pratap Singh bt Aymen Abderrahmene Ali Moussa (Alg) 6-3, 6-0; Ishaque Eqbal bt Vicente Oliver Morattala 6-2, 6-2.

Women: Second round: Ines Bekrar (Alg) bt Smriti Bhasin 6-3, 6-2; Aglaya Fedeorova bt Priyanka Rodricks 6-0, 6-0.

Doubles: First round: Amira Benaissa & Ines Ibbou (Alg) bt Smriti Bhasin & Priyanka Rodricks 6-2, 6-0.

$25,000 ITF women, Tbilisi, Georgia: First round: Leonie Kung (Sui) bt Zeel Desai 6-3, 6-2.

$15,000 ITF women, Cancun, Mexico: First round: Laura Daniela Patino (Col) Sravya Shivani bt Dylan Cline (USA) & Katya Ramirez (Mex) 6-0, 6-4.

India eyes big win against Indonesia

The team will also hope Japan defeats Pakistan

ASIA CUP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAKARTA

Defending champion India needs to defeat host Indonesia by a huge margin and hope Japan beats Pakistan in the other Pool A match to advance to the knockout stage of the Asia Cup men's hockey tournament here on Thursday.

India's fate is not in its own hands anymore as even a win against the lowly Indonesia will not guarantee a knock-out berth for the team. Japan will have to down Pakistan to keep India's faint hopes alive.

With a draw and a loss, India is third in Pool A behind Japan (six points) and Pakistan (four).

Under the guidance of Sardar Singh, India fielded a young team alongside a handful of seniors like Birendra Lakra and S.V. Sunil. But the senior duo looked well past their prime if their performances in the two matches so far are to go by.

Tough situation: The loss against Japan has put India in a spot. • TWITTER@THEHOCKEYINDIA

India conceded a last minute goal to draw 1-1 against Pakistan before being thrashed by Japan 5-2.

Tough task

Now, a "next to impossible" task awaits India as it not only has to score big against Indonesia but also hope Japan puts it across Pakistan in the other Pool A match on Thursday if has to progress to the Super 4 stage.

India has a goal difference of -3 as against Pakistan's +13. If Pakistan loses to Japan, India will have to beat Indonesia by a huge margin to have a better goal difference and advance.

Inexperience was the major reason behind India's below-par performances as the youngsters are finding it difficult to get a measure of the level of international hockey.

No cohesion

The team has lacked cohesion in defence, midfield and forwardline. India did not have any quality playmaker in the midfield, which was evident from the constant effort to build attacks from the centre instead of using both flanks more frequently.

Lakra looked a pale shadow of himself in the backline, which has crumbled big time when put under relentless pressure. The forwadline has been wasteful with the likes of Tokyo Olympian Simranjeet Singh and youngster Uttam Singh not having the best of outings. Pawan Rajbhar is the only player to have impressed with his stick work, creating chances and also scoring a goal.

Neeraj to train in Finland

Neeraj. • FILE PHOTO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Neeraj Chopra will shift his training base from Turkey to Finland ahead of his season-opening events later this month after the government cleared the same.

The Olympic gold medalist javelin thrower will fly out on Thursday and train at the Kuortane Olympic Training Centre till June 22, participating in the Paavo Nurmi Games, the Kuortane Games and the Stockholm Diamond League in the interim. Incidentally, Paralympics gold medalist Devendra Jhajharia is also training there.

The four-week training camp has been sanctioned by Sports Authority of India (SAI) and the Target Olympic Podium Scheme at a cost of approximately ₹9.8 lakhs with SAI also requesting the Ministry of External Affairs to ensure smooth travel.

Bangalore Summer Meeting from May 28

RACING

RIAZ BABU
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Summer Meeting 2022, originally scheduled to commence from May 21, will now get underway from May 28.

The total prize money earmarked is ₹14.41 crore and the value of trophies is ₹19.80 lakh. Chivas is the 'beverage partner' for the meeting.

Briefing the media here on Wednesday, K. Uday Eswaran, chairman of the Bangalore Turf Club (BTC), said in line with 'One Nation, One Tax', the Turf Authorities of India is striving hard to commence the combined tote operations/commingling amongst all the turf clubs in India as 'One Nation, One Tote', so as to maximise the tote revenue and enable the racing patrons to earn higher dividends.

Holding court: The Bangalore Turf Club chairman K. Uday Eswaran, fourth from left, addressing the media on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

As the next year's Indian Turf Invitation Cup races are being hosted by the BTC during the first weekend of March 2023, BTC will be the Turf Authorities of India till such time.

The Golf Invitation Cup Tournament, comprising four members of turf authorities, trainers, jockeys and breeders, will be hosted by the BTC at the Bangalore Golf Club on March 3, 2023.

There is an average 21% increase in prize money across all categories of races compared to the winter meeting

The Bangalore Summer Derby is scheduled for July 17 (Sunday). The advertised guaranteed prize money is ₹200 lakh and value of trophies is ₹3 lakh.

In all, about 112 jockeys are expected to participate during the summer meeting.

Members of managing committee: K. Uday Eswaran (chairman), Anish Sood, Arvind Raghavan, Ashwin D.K., Darshan Lokesh, Naval R. Narielwalla, I.S.N. Prasad, IAS, C.H. Pratap Reddy, IPS, A.C. Satish Chandra, Satish N. Gowda, K.N. Shanth Kumar, G. Shivakumar and Dr. L. Sreenivasa Reddy.

Board of appeal: V. Harimohan Naidu (chairman), Kiran Basappa, I.S.N. Prasad IAS, C.H. Pratap Reddy, IPS, Shivkumar Kheny and D. Vinod Sivappa.

Racing dates: May: 28 and 29; **June:** 4 and 5, 11 and 12, 18 and 19, 25 and 26.

July: 2 and 3, 9 and 10, 16 and 17, 23 and 24, 30 and 31; **August:** 4 and 5.

Wimbledon 'will never be an exhibition': Murray

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
LONDON

Two-time Wimbledon champion Andy Murray said on Wednesday that the tournament "will never feel like an exhibition" despite it being stripped of ranking points over the ban on Russian and Belarusian players.

"I'd hazard a guess that most people watching on centre court Wimbledon in a few weeks' time wouldn't know or care about how many ranking points a player gets for winning a third round match," tweeted Murray. "But I guarantee they will remember who wins. Wimbledon will never be an exhibition and will never feel like an exhibition."

Former women's World No.1 Naomi Osaka has revealed she is "leaning towards not playing" Wimbledon while defending champion Novak Djokovic said he will play despite losing 2,000 points.

Murray. • FILE PHOTO

But Djokovic described it as a "lose-lose situation", and the controversy has showed no signs of abating.

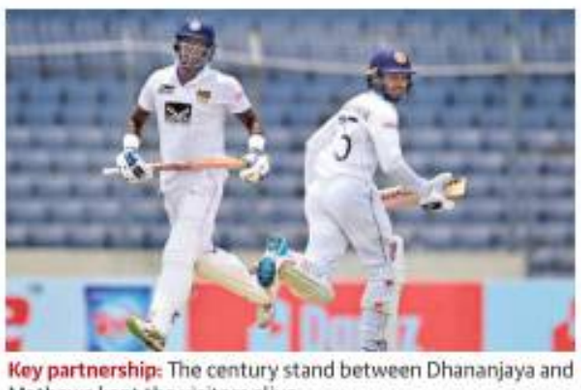
Award for Klopp

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
LONDON

Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp has been named the League Managers' Association Premier League Manager of the Year, it was announced on Tuesday.

The Reds won both the League Cup and FA Cup, beating Chelsea in penalty shoot-outs on both occasions. Klopp, collecting his accolade on Tuesday, said: "It is a great honour and it was an insane season."

Sri Lanka makes strong reply



Key partnership: The century stand between Dhananjaya and Mathews kept the visitors alive. • AFP

SL IN BANGLADESH

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DHAKA

Angelo Mathews and Dhananjaya de Silva each hit a fifty and put on a 102-run partnership to keep Sri Lanka going strong in the rain-hit second Test against Bangladesh on Wednesday. Mathews remained unbeaten on 58 after de Silva went out with the same score to take Sri Lanka to 282 for five at stumps on the third day, still trailing Bangladesh by 83 runs.

The scores: Bangladesh 365 in 116.2 overs vs Sri Lanka 282/5 in 97 overs (Dimuth Karunaratne 80, Angelo Mathews 58 batting, Dhananjaya de Silva 58, Oshado Fernando 57, Shakib Al Hasan 3/59).

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Roots FS takes honours

Roots FS defeated FC Mangalore 9-8 on penalties to win the KSFA C-division North Zone final on Wednesday. The win earned Roots a place in next season's B-division.
At the end of regulation time, scores were tied 1-1 and even the penalty shoot-out was locked at 5-5, before Roots edged it in sudden death.
The results: Roots FS 1 (R. Vishal 4) bt FC Mangalore 1 (Thumsol Tongsin 20). *9-8 on penalties.*

Shikhar stars in Dell CC's facile win

Shikhar Shetty's four-wicket haul (4/26) was instrumental in Dell CC's eight-wicket win over Bangalore Division SA, SWR in the KSCA (Group II) second division tournament.
The scores: RBI RC 148/5 in 16 overs (G.S. Chiranjeevi 39, S.A. Rishi Bopanna 42 n.o.) bt BWSSB Employees Association 70 in 15.1 overs (Sourabh Manohar Naik 29, Sanjeev Kumar Jha 4/12) [Match reduced to 14 overs per side because of wet outfield]. Bangalore Division SA, SWR 109 in 17.1 overs (Rabindar Singh 25, Shikhar Shetty 4/26) lost to Dell CC 39/2 in 6.4 overs [Target revised to 39 from seven overs following rain].

Triumphant: The victorious Roots FS squad. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Hutti Gold Mines CC 94 in 19.2 overs (K.L. Guruprasad 3/19) lost to KPTCL Sports Organisation 96/5 in 13.4 overs (K.N. Vinay Kumar 31 n.o., Channamurthy 3/9).

Easy for HAL FC

HAL FC defeated Friend United FC 3-1 in the BDFA A-division league championship, here on Wednesday.
The results: A-div: HAL FC 3 (S. Johny Kom 25, Sathish Kumar 40+2, Rohit 51) bt Friends United FC 1 (Don Bosco 71).
B-div: Goans FC 4 (Pradeum Subba 10, 38, Aryan Subba 26, Satish Singh Gurjar (OG) 14) bt Sun Rise FC 1 (Raunak Wilfred Jaichandra (OG) 43).

Phalke named skipper

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Vaishnavi Phalke was named captainas Hockey India announced a 20-member Indian junior women's team on Wednesday for the U-23 five nations tournament in Dublin from June 19 to 26. It will also feature in FIH Hockey 5s in Lausanne on June 4 and 5.
The team:
Goalkeepers: Khushboo, Kurmapu Ramya.
Defenders: Preeti, Mamita Oram, Mahima Tete, Neelam, Hritika Singh.
Midfielders: Manju Chorsiya, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke (capt.), Jyoti Chhatri, Hina Bano, Nikita Toppo, Ashwini Kolekar, Rutaja Dadaso Pisal.
Forwards: Annu, Beauty Dungdung, Mumtaz Khan (vice-capt.), Deepika Soreng, Monika Dipi Toppo, Mudugula Bhavani.